

WHERE TO DINE IN LONDON

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by
Bon Vivant

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TWO MANCHESTER SQUARE, LONDON

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I wish to express my gratitude to the restaurateurs and others who have assisted me in the compilation of this little book. In particular my thanks are due to Mr. Patrick Beloe for some letters of introduction, to Monsieur E. Berthaud for his ideas on the composition of a menu, and to Captain Gordon Halsey for at least two brainwaves.

“ BON VIVEUR.”

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I

FOOD AND ITS HISTORY

AN important event in the social history of England was the revolution caused by the introduction of Continental cookery, which broke out in the 'sixties of the last century.

At that time, the eating-places of London consisted, broadly speaking, of chop-houses where food could be had such as one eats to-day at Ye Olde Cheshire Cheese, the George and Vulture, Stone's, or the Lord Belgrave, and of buffets similar to our station buffets. There were also various Turkish Divans in the West End which young men frequented in much the same spirit that they still frequent certain night haunts and bottle parties: food was a secondary consideration and the management was responsible for the company. It was almost impossible to dine out with a respectable lady.

Now, it is one of the boasts of our own national cookery that it has remained comparatively unaffected by the lapse of time. The proprietor of any chop-house will tell you, not that he was the first to introduce this or that dish to England, but that his pies or his puddings are made from a recipe a hundred or more years old.

If, therefore, you wish to dine as your grandfather dined, you need only visit one of those restaurants

which are not ashamed to uphold the national tradition, and order a meal on the lines of those described in Charles Dickens's novels. For instance, this is the menu of a meal eaten by David Copperfield and the Micawbers :

Hot Punch
Fried Sole
Leg of Mutton
Pigeon Pie

In this particular case, of course, the mutton was damaged by being dropped, and Mr. Micawber's treatment for it was to cut it in slices, which he then covered with pepper, mustard, salt and cayenne for David to turn on the gridiron while Mrs. Micawber stirred some mushroom ketchup over the fire.

The keynote of English cookery is simplicity. Broadly speaking, it is French cookery interrupted some considerable time before the completion of each dish. It lacks finesse and subtlety of flavour and, whereas England has, according to Voltaire, forty religions, it has no more than half a dozen sauces. It must not be forgotten, however, that even sauces are sometimes used for concealment, and that almost anything can be made almost eatable by expert preparation. In the case of a joint, a steak or a chop, on the other hand, served plain and unadorned, everything depends on the quality of the meat, and the meat is therefore likely to be good.

I have little patience with those die-hards who are continually telling me that English and Scottish meat is the best in the world. As regards beef, I agree. There is nothing I enjoy so dearly for lunch as braised beef with carrots and floury potatoes, or

in summer a couple of slices from the cold joint with pickles and beetroot. York ham, too, is a delicacy and English lamb can be excellent, but with mutton and veal it is a different story. A saddle of English mutton, however palatable, is not to be compared with that lean, exquisitely-flavoured meat which I have eaten in some parts of France. Veal, in this country, is never bled white enough for good eating, due, no doubt, to the otherwise admirable activities of the R.S.P.C.A., while the young goat, or kid, highly esteemed in France and Italy, is for some reason despised on this side of the Channel.

In any case, the general superiority of the Continental cuisine can be gauged by the swiftness with which the revolution accomplished itself in the latter half of the nineteenth century. I use the term "Continental" and not "French" advisedly, because this type of cookery originated not in France but in Renaissance Italy. One of the first great chefs, the inventor of *Fricandeau de Veau*, which is a thick piece of rump braised in white wine, was employed by Pope Leo X. Religion and gastronomy, in those days at least, went hand in hand.

In France, before the Middle Ages were swept away, châteaux and monasteries had their own fish ponds, where they kept carp, pike and tench, and their own recipes for preserves of various kinds. Venison, more often than not, was the *pièce de résistance* of the feudal banquet.

In the sixteenth century we come already to Henri IV and his philanthropic wish to see a fowl boiling in every home on a Sunday, and to the great Condé, the untimely fate of whose chef has been

recorded by Madame de Sévigné's more able pen.

In the seventeenth century, when the whole of France became concentrated on the Court at Versailles, gastronomy was one of the arts which flourished under the new conditions of peace, wealth and leisure. Béchamel, the inventor of one of the most important basic sauces, was *maître d'hôtel* to Louis XIV.

Cooking at this period was elaborate and recklessly extravagant. Dishes were designed to appeal to the eye at least as much as to the palate. There was little or no scientific knowledge of food values, and menus were therefore, on the whole, ill designed.

It will be seen that the arts of gastronomy were well advanced by the time of Louis XV, but there were as yet no public restaurants in Paris. The first of these, the Champ d'Oiseau, in the Rue de Poulies, was founded in 1770, and by 1789 there were a hundred of them. The French Revolution caused a temporary set-back for, as that great gourmet Grimod de la Reynière observed of these troublous times, there was "not a single turbot in the market." Yet, by the turn of the century, the number of restaurants had increased to some five hundred. The year 1804 witnessed the birth of the celebrated *Almanach des Gourmands*.

Some of the great names of Napoleon's day were Chancellor Cambacérès, Robert and Beauvilliers. I must pause here, also, to lay a metaphorical wreath upon the tomb of Brillat-Savarin, the legislator and magistrate who has gone down to history as the philosopher of food. His *Physiologie du Goût* is surely one of the most fascinating books ever written, and I look forward to the day when it

will be recognised in schools and colleges as a classic of its period.

Careme, author of *Le Maître d'Hôtel Français*, was in turn chef to Czar Alexander I, Talleyrand, George IV and Baron Rothschild. He was one of several famous Continental cooks who found their way to England about this time to gladden the tables of the rich. The gastronomic revolution to which I have referred above was already stirring.

In 1865 M. Daniel Nicols opened his restaurant in Regent Street, later to be known as the Café Royal. From a meeting-place for French refugees this gradually evolved into the Bohemian playground which it still is, more or less, to-day. Romano and Oddenino, who both worked there at one time, subsequently left and started restaurants of their own.

In 1869 Mr. Pinoli opened his restaurant in Wardour Street, and in 1873 the Criterion Restaurant was built and opened by Spiers & Pond, two of the leading pioneers of the catering business.

In 1879 the Grand Hotel, Trafalgar Square, was opened by Mr. Frederick Gordon, an ex-solicitor, who had already founded several City restaurants. In 1880 he followed this with the Hotel Metropole, Northumberland Avenue. In 1883 came the First Avenue Hotel, Holborn, and in 1887 the Hotel Victoria, built in Northumberland Avenue at a cost of £520,000. Mr. Gordon found time to buy Krasnopolsky's Restaurant in Oxford Street, henceforward to be known as Frascati. He was also Chairman of the Frederick Hotels Company, which was formed in 1889 with a share capital of a quarter of a million sterling.

This same year, 1889, witnessed the formation

of the Savoy Hotel Company, which now comprises the Savoy, Claridge's, the Berkeley and Simpson's-in-the-Strand. The last mentioned eating-house, originally called John Simpson's Grand Divan Tavern, had been founded as far back as 1828. Claridge's, previously known as Mivart's, was rebuilt in 1890 and given its name by Mr. John Claridge, the proprietor.

In 1896 were opened the Hotel Cecil and the Trocadero. The latter was the first big venture of J. Lyons & Co., which had been born at the Newcastle-on-Tyne Jubilee Exhibition nine years before. The Company was actually founded in 1894 with a capital of £120,000. To-day, this figure has grown to £9,925,000, and the Company controls also the Cumberland Hotel at Marble Arch, the Royal Palace Hotel, Kensington, the Strand Palace Hotel and the Regent Palace Hotel, which was built for £600,000 in 1915, apart from the Corner Houses, brasseries, cafés and tea-shops through which they have brought good eating within the humblest means.

But I anticipate. In 1906 the Ritz and the Jules Hotel, Jermyn Street, were opened, and in 1908 the Waldorf in Aldwych and the Piccadilly. Maxim's Restaurant first saw the light of Wardour Street in 1809.

The Great War, strangely enough, seemed to cause no great hiatus in this rapid expansion. The year 1915 saw the inception not only of the Regent Palace and the Strand Corner House, but of Ciro's New Restaurant Club, famed for the cooking of M. Rossignol, who now officiates at Quaglino's.

To proceed to more recent years, the Park Lane, May Fair and Green Park Hotels all date from

1927. The Hungaria Restaurant, in Lower Regent Street, was started in 1928. The Dorchester, in Park Lane, was opened in 1931, and the Mount Royal, Oxford Street, in 1934.

It has been impossible, in this brief survey, to do more than indicate the astounding fashion in which the face of London has been changed in the course of the last sixty or seventy years. Holborn, Piccadilly, Northumberland Avenue and Park Lane, to mention only a few great thoroughfares, have been altered completely by the mighty revolution which has swept away discomfort, inefficient service and unenlightened cookery for those who have the money to pay for something better.

At the same time, the big hotels have served as training-ground for *maîtres d'hôtel* and chefs who have long since started restaurants of their own all over the West End.

It is one of the paradoxes of the restaurant business that, though there are already too many eating-places in London (witness all the failures and the empty tables), it is always possible to make a success of a new one. The West End restaurateur must move with the times. If some particular form of *décor* is in vogue, he must re-decorate at fantastic expense. He must continually produce new dishes and new methods of serving them. If, as at present, cabarets are the rage, he must give his patrons cabaret.

Here, I must put in a word of deprecation. Is it asking too much of the diner-out that he should eat his meal and then proceed to some place of entertainment? Is he really so lazy that he would rather sit where he is, munching his chicken in partial darkness, while entertainment, of a sort,

is brought to him? I do not like cabarets. They are more often than not cheap and trivial, for few managements can afford to compete with the Variety Theatres for the engagement of first-class turns.

Yet, since Sir Francis Towle of the Gordon Hotels originated the Midnight Follies, cabarets have become increasingly popular, and it is now tempting Providence for a smart restaurant to carry on without one. However, it seems that at last the suggestive song, a tradition founded, if I remember rightly, by Rex Evans at the Café Anglais and so ably maintained by Douglas Byng, Dwight Fiske and others, is dying a slow and painful death, and I have noticed lately a return to such innocent amusements as conjuring, trick music and acrobatics, though the balance was upset by that shattering affair called "Knock-Knock" which caused so many band leaders to forget the dignity of their calling.

Owing to the popularity of cabaret in some form or other, dinner has almost ceased to exist in smart West End circles, and late supper has taken its place. This supper trade is a tricky business from the restaurateur's point of view. The percentage of bad bills, that is to say bills unpaid and with or without a signature on them, is in some cases more than fifty per cent, and the diners concerned are usually too highly placed for the restaurant to take action against them without damaging its good name. It is financially a mistake for a restaurant to raise its social tone beyond certain limits, for the business man, the provincial up to Town for a day or two and the visiting foreigner make the best customers.

It has been my pleasure in the past to dine and

sup at many of the smart and glittering establishments of the West End, but no less dear to my heart are those other places, hidden in back streets in Soho and elsewhere, where there is no music and no cabaret, where there are no quails or caviare or overrated *scampi*, and where a good dinner may sometimes be had for much less than 5/- a head. It is one part of my mission to introduce the diner-out to these Elysian haunts.

Waiter, the menu !

II

HOW TO CHOOSE A MEAL

THERE are several right ways of choosing a meal, according to the taste and nationality of the chooser. There is certainly one wrong way, and that is the one which, willy-nilly, the average diner-out adopts. The menu is handed to him and the waiter immediately begins to rattle off a list of hors-d'œuvres, followed by soups and fishes. By the time the main dish is reached, which is, shall we say, duckling and green peas, the most amazing collection of ill-assorted foods has been jumbled together. It is more than likely that the subtle flavour of the young bird will be ruined by what goes before, and the appetite blunted in any case by injudicious use of the hors-d'œuvre. For instance, I have often observed a liberal assortment of these being followed by a plate of thick vegetable soup.

It is possible that each individual dish chosen by the inexpert eater may be excellent, but this is poor consolation if the combined effect is sorrow and indigestion.

No, the correct course is to start ordering a meal in the middle. The most important dish should first be chosen, and the preliminary and concluding dishes planned to accord with it. In the choice of what should constitute the *point d'appui* of the feast the diner should be guided by the time of year.

Supposing that this is the merry month of May, there is no reason why he should deny himself his duckling and green peas, but so rich and delicate a bird should be preceded by a very plain fish, whiting for instance, or a sole *vin blanc*. If a rich hors-d'œuvre is chosen the palate should afterwards be cleaned by a cup of *consommé*. The sweet should be a light one, preferably a *soufflé*.

If, on the other hand, the fish is to be in the limelight, something like salmon *à la Champagne* may be chosen. This is prepared with yolk of egg whisked with Champagne, and served with flaked truffles. An appropriate opening to such a meal is a creamy soup of not too strong a flavour, such as Crème St. Germain, and a plainly cooked spring chicken should follow the salmon. To round off with, an ice pudding decorated with the first strawberries is most acceptable.

Always, therefore, insist on being left alone with your menu for at least five minutes before ordering. In parenthesis, this is by no means an outrageous demand. M. Avignon, *chef de cuisine* at the Ritz, tells me that it takes him three days to compose a really good menu, and that precipitate action is fatal. First think over the delicacies of the season and decide which one appeals to you most. While doing this, remember that plain foods can be quite as delicious as rich ones, and that you are losing nothing and sparing your digestion when you avoid over-indulgence in the latter. A silver whiting *sur le plat* may not be smart, but it is every bit as eatable as a sole, and the same applies to many a well-deserving outsider.

Thanks to modern methods of rapid transport, forcing, packing and preserving, it is possible to

eat nearly everything at any time of the year. This is not, however, an unmixed blessing, since everything tastes better in season than out of it. It is certainly well worth acquiring the necessary knowledge in order to choose what is best to eat in any given month, for it is one of the joys of the gastronomic year that there is always something fresh and delicious somewhere on the menu—the first *poussin*, the tender lamb from Bordeaux, some new form of game or the young pea or asparagus.

The golden rule is never to serve a strongly flavoured or pungent dish or sauce before a fragile one. Supposing you are to eat a *suprême* of chicken, for example, with a cream, *foie gras* and brandy sauce, it will be almost impossible to devise anything delicate enough to precede it, and it is best not to attempt to do so. The sweet should be as exotic as possible, *Crêpes Suzette* filling the bill admirably. Actually, this last was a lunch arranged by M. Sovrani.

Meals are so small nowadays that there is no room for mistakes. One slip will ruin the evening. The standard dinner of twenty years ago comprised two entrées, a sorbet, a roast and a cold buffet. Since then, appetites have grown less and less. Some years ago it became necessary for restaurants to have a "Theatre Dinner" in addition to a larger one for those who were prepared to spend the evening at it. Nowadays, the usual custom is to serve dinner from a certain price, whether it be 5/6 or 15/6. The vogue is for a *Dîner au Choix*, or daily fixed-price menu giving a choice of about half a dozen carefully selected dishes for each course. This is much easier to deal with than a semi-permanent *à la carte* menu with its bewildering variety.

One of the problems confronting the host in a public restaurant is to choose a meal which all his guests will appreciate. It is inadvisable to order very exotic foods when there is no guarantee of how they will be received. It is the test of the good host that he should be able to order a varied and interesting dinner while making use of comparatively simple materials. If it is a mixed party, it should be remembered that the feminine taste is for dishes pleasing to the eye and light on the palate, and the meat should be such as will accord with a bottle of white wine or with one of the graceful *chûs* of the Médoc.

When men are dining together, on the other hand, everything which is merely pretty or elegant should be suppressed, and the accent should be laid on English or Scottish meat of fine quality. This applies to the mid-day meal particularly. The average Englishman likes to lunch off a plain steak or chop or a simple dish of beef or mutton.

A good suggestion for the unwilling appetite is a lunch composed mainly of fish. Here is a menu devised by Madame Prunier, who has come over from Paris to run her new fish restaurant in St. James's Street :

Huitres
Turbot Grillé, Sauce Hollandaise
Pâté de Saumon
Salade de Légumes
Mousse au Kirsch
Café

Knowledge of market prices is indispensable to the conscientious gourmet, since it will often enable him to smell a rat, described, possibly, on the menu

as stuffed quail. I mention this point because the integrity of the French cuisine has, in many cases, been corrupted by the popularity of its gastronomic vocabulary among cheap restaurants in London. Houses which serve plain English food are apt to translate their menus into the most flagrantly inept French, using what should be accurate terms with a complete disregard of their meaning. If, for instance, on a 2/- table d'hôte you find some dish purporting to be prepared with truffles and *foie gras*, you are entitled to be dubious, for neither of these is sold for a song. Equally, if you are offered Lobster Newburg at anything under 4/-, there is obviously something amiss, since, besides the initial expense of the lobster, a glass of sherry, some brandy and double cream should be used in the cooking, and the management must be allowed its profit. Plutocratic food should be eaten, if at all, at its own prices. It is only the mugs who fall for a succulent-sounding name, and in general the higher the hopes are raised by the wording of a table d'hôte, the greater is the disappointment. In a cheap restaurant, it is usually advisable to order *à la carte*.

Another pernicious trick is the indiscriminate naming of dishes after the proprietor of a restaurant. I remember once finding on a menu an item which I will call *Sole Pomposo*. When I enquired of Signor Pomposo how this was done, I was informed that I could have it either fried with butter or grilled! The vocabulary of cooking is already so vast and unwieldy that it should not be enlarged without good reason.

As things are, it is a long business getting to know how the presence of any one ingredient is denoted.

Here is a short and elementary list for the guidance of the unenlightened :

<i>Africaine</i>	Rice
<i>Allemande</i>	Cream of Chicken
<i>Alsacienne</i>	Sour Cabbage
<i>Américaine</i>	Lobster
<i>Anglaise</i>	Plainly cooked
<i>Argenteuil</i>	Asparagus
<i>Arlésienne</i>	Garlic
<i>Athéniennne</i>	Aubergines
<i>Béarnaise</i>	Hollandaise flavoured with shallots
<i>Belle Hélène</i>	Ice and hot chocolate sauce
<i>au Bleu</i>	Boiled with vinegar
<i>Bombay</i>	Curry
<i>Bonne-femme</i>	Potatoes
<i>Bordelaise</i>	Claret and <i>sauce brune</i>
<i>Bourguignonne</i>	Burgundy with onions and garlic
<i>Bretonne</i>	Haricot beans
<i>Brunoise</i>	Fresh vegetables
<i>Cancelalaise</i>	Oysters
<i>Caprice</i>	Bananas
<i>Cardinal</i>	Shellfish
<i>Caroline</i>	Rice
<i>Chantilly</i>	Whipped cream
<i>Chasseur</i>	Mushrooms
<i>Clamart</i>	Green Peas
<i>Demidoff</i>	<i>Foie gras</i> and truffles
<i>Dieppoise</i>	Mussels
<i>Dubarry</i>	Cauliflower
<i>Duchesse</i>	Potatoes
<i>Esaü</i>	Lentils
<i>Estragon</i>	Tarragon
<i>Fermière</i>	Vegetables

<i>Filateur</i>	Vermicelli
<i>Florentine</i>	Spinach
<i>Garbure</i>	Cabbage
<i>Garibaldi</i>	Spaghetti
<i>Germiny</i>	Sorrel
<i>Grecque</i>	Oil
<i>Henri IV</i>	Rice
<i>Hongroise</i>	Paprika
<i>Indienne</i>	Curry
<i>Italiennne</i>	Macaroni
<i>Joinville</i>	Prawns
<i>Julienne</i>	Fresh vegetables
<i>Livornaise</i>	Tomatoes
<i>Lorette</i>	Celery
<i>Lyonnaise</i>	Onions
<i>Maître d'Hôtel</i>	Butter and herbs
<i>Marinière</i>	White wine and shallots
<i>Melba</i>	Ice and syrup
<i>Meyerbeer</i>	Kidneys and truffles
<i>Mirabeau</i>	Anchovies
<i>Monte Carlo</i>	Capers
<i>Montreuil</i>	Peaches
<i>Mornay</i>	Cheese sauce
<i>Nantua</i>	Ecrévisses
<i>Napolitaine</i>	Macaroni
<i>Nesselrode</i>	Chestnuts
<i>Newburg</i>	Cream, brandy and sherry
<i>Nivernaise</i>	Carrots
<i>Palestine</i>	Jerusalem artichokes
<i>Paysanne</i>	Fresh vegetables
<i>Polignac</i>	Champagne
<i>Portugaise</i>	Tomatoes
<i>Princesse</i>	Asparagus
<i>Printanière</i>	Fresh vegetables
<i>Raphaël</i>	Celery

<i>Réforme</i>	Onions
<i>Rossini</i>	<i>Foie gras</i> and truffles
<i>St. Germain</i>	Peas
<i>Solférino</i>	Tomatoes and carrots
<i>Soubise</i>	Onions
<i>Trouville</i>	Shrimps
<i>Vichy</i>	New carrots
<i>Villeroy</i>	Mushrooms
<i>Xavier</i>	Broad beans

Those phrases which denote two or three ingredients together are almost impossible for the amateur, but it is worth persevering. A full understanding of the menu is a priceless possession.

One last word of advice. Always dine somewhere where the coffee is good. The last impression remains longest in the mind, and even if you have had the best of dinners a bad cup will destroy its beneficial effects. Here is the method of making coffee recommended by the great Brillat-Savarin :

“ Pour boiling water on coffee placed in a pot of china or silver pierced with air-holes. Take this first brew, heat it to boiling point, do the same again, and you have a coffee as clear and good as possible.”

It sounds easy enough. . . .

III

THE MARRIAGE OF FOOD AND WINE

IT is the fashion to be dogmatic about wine : necessarily so, for if the writer once began to qualify his statements he would never finish. The very versatility with which different wines completely change their functions—our grandfathers, who knew more about wine than we do, drank claret after dinner—affords a cogent reminder that it is all a matter of opinion. Let that opinion be stated, then, as plainly as possible.

Sherry has lately been torn from its proper place at table and has become engaged in a regular dog-fight with gin and its compounds for the six o'clock pick-me-up trade. The result has been a rapid deterioration in quality, most hosts seeming content with just ordering "sherry" from provision merchants and "drink or return" establishments. This is a shocking state of affairs. Wine should be bought from a wine merchant and from no one else.

Excessive dryness in a sherry should be avoided when more than a glass or two is being drunk, but there should be a dry finish, so that the wine has no cloying effect on the palate. Therefore, the best wine for six o'clock drinking is something in the nature of a Vino de Pasto. The fine, dry wines, such as Macharnudo Fino or Tio Pepe, which are

very expensive, are best kept for that peaceful moment when the soup is about to make its appearance.

If the first course consists of oysters, the perfect accompaniment for them, I consider, is an elegant and distinctive white wine such as Chablis or Sancerre, or one of the wines of Alsace.

White fish may be eaten with either a dry or a sweet wine according to the taste of the diner. Best, perhaps, are the sweet wines of Graves, Barsac or Anjou. With a fresh lake trout, I prefer Hock. The virility and clean flavour of the German wine suits this fine fish admirably. 1929 and 1930 are the best years for dinner Hocks. The older vintages, such as the outstanding 1921, are now inclined to be too sugary for meal-time drinking, though there are, of course, exceptions.

In the summer it is pleasant and refreshing to compose a dinner suited for serving with a white wine only, a Moselle for preference, slightly iced. This does not mean necessarily that nothing but white meat may be served. So long as they are not flavoured with a *sauce brune* or a red wine sauce, dark meats may be eaten with a Moselle, a Pouilly or a white wine of the Côte d'Or.

Claret is the finest of all table wines. It should not be drunk before nine or ten years, and it improves almost indefinitely if kept beyond that time. He is a lucky man who still has some of the celebrated Château Lafite of 1895 in his cellar. Other fine years for claret have been 1899, 1900, 1911, and more recently 1922, 1923, 1924, 1926, 1928 and 1929. The best year which you are likely to find on the wine list of the average small restaurant nowadays is 1924.

The five growths of the Médoc, with the district to which each one belongs, should be roughly memorised by the Claret drinker as a basis on which to index his personal experiences. It is dangerous to choose haphazard from the wine list, as some very poisonous concoctions are bottled under the various district names of the Bordeaux country. Claret should be served *chambré*, that is to say brought to the temperature of the room in which it is to be drunk.

The wines of the Médoc and also red Graves, such as Château Haut Brion, make the best accompaniment for chicken and white meat of all kinds, so long as the sauce does not conflict with them. It is one of the unwritten laws that red wine may not be served with a cream sauce.

With red meat and with all kinds of game, the wines of Pomerol or St. Emilion are on friendly terms. But best of all is Burgundy.

Burgundy is a mighty wine, strong and heady and full-bodied, a wine for warriors and heroes. It should be warmed slightly before serving, as otherwise it does not attain its full bouquet. The best years for Burgundy are 1911, 1919, 1923, 1926, which though good shows too much tannin, 1928 and 1929. 1921 was also a fine year for the white Burgundies.

A good Burgundy is the perfect dinner wine for a winter's evening. If you are drinking a Chambertin, a Romanée or a Richebourg of the 1923 vintage, it is best to omit the sweet and eat cheese or a savoury, so that you may sip your last glass in contentment. Vintage Port comes well enough after Burgundy if the party is large enough to warrant a bottle, but it is unwise to trust to the kind of

Port often sold by the glass in restaurants. I once was served with some remarkable wine with a head on it only equalled by a freshly-poured Guinness. In such circumstances, it is better to keep to the Burgundy.

Châteauneuf du Pape, which comes from the Rhone valley near Avignon, is another excellent wine for the winter months, having a generous, robust quality which nerves the diner against the worst rainstorms and fogs. The 1929 vintage is now in perfect condition.

Incidentally, a very pleasant beverage wine is Vin Rosé. The best is that of Anjou, and it is also the most expensive, but Tavel, which hails from the Rhone valley, is so excellent that it inspired the death-song of a great French poet, Tancrède Martel. He wrote :

Le jour où je mourrai n'aura rien de morose
Et vous vous en irez droit à l'hôtellerie !

Vous redirez, autour de la nappe fleurie
Les mots que j'ai semés le long du boulevard.

Vous boirez longuement, amis, tout d'une haleine
Ces vieux vins que j'aimais quand j'étais un vivant,
Le Corton velouté qui mûrit dans la plaine
Et le Tavel éclos sous les baisers du vent.

The proper wine to drink with the sweet is sweet Champagne. Unfortunately, this charming wine has all but disappeared from the wine list, and its dry successor has deteriorated into a sort of counter in the game of love. We wretched men are expected by our fair companions to show our affection by

buying them Champagne at lunch, dinner and supper. The result is that many small restaurants cannot afford to stock anything but Champagne, grocer's champagne at that, and a bottle or two of the next best thing, which is usually Sparkling Muscatel, a dreadful wine; while there are palaces of entertainment in Park Lane and elsewhere, and innumerable clubs, dives and bottle parties, where the more expensive brands are purveyed in their tens of thousands at 30/- a time. Some gourmets of good repute like to drink Champagne right through dinner, but personally I find this a tiresome habit. Its great service is that it creates the illusion of brilliance in the dullest party. A Sauternes, such as Château Yquem, or a Barsac may also be drunk with the sweet.

Port is inclined to bring too masculine an atmosphere into a mixed restaurant party, and a more fitting close to the meal is given by brandy and liqueurs. Brandy should be as ancient as possible. It should be soft and mellow, with a taste of cobwebs, old gold and moonshine. Napoleon Brandy is nowadays usually reckoned a fraud by the connoisseurs, but I have drunk some purporting to be of the year 1811, and it was certainly very fine. The fifty or sixty year old distillations are, however, cheaper and much more reliable. Brandy rounds off a meal better than any liqueur. Many ladies are not disposed to think so, however, and they may be left to the enjoyment of their Van der Hum, Crème de Menthe, Ginger Brandy, or Grand Marnier.

This brief review of the possibilities of the wine list in its relation to food may fittingly be brought to a close by a series of menus for the four seasons

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of the year with wines appropriate to them. Here they are :

SPRING

Honey Dew Melon

Pale Sherry

Crème Germiny (sorrel)

Saumon d'Ecosse au Champagne

Meursault or Chablis

Baron de Pauillac (lamb) *aux Artichauts*

Château Haut Brion or Château Mouton Rothschild

Asperges de Lauris (green asparagus) *Sauce Isigny*

Champagne

Fraises Rafraîchies

SUMMER

Cantaloup (musk-melon) *Frappé*

Sherry

Truite Saumonnée (salmon-trout) *au Coulis de*

Homard (lobster sauce)

Pouilly de la Loire

Surrey (chicken) *à la Gelée*

Pommard, Corton or Beaune

Salade d'Asperges d'Argenteuil (fat, white asparagus)

Champagne

Fraises et Framboises des Bois au Kümmel

AUTUMN

Huîtres de Whitstable

Chablis or Vin d'Alsace

Bortch Polonoise (red vegetable soup)

Tourte de Sole Marinière (with sea-fruit)

Faisan à la Broche

Clos de Vougeot

Salade Lorette (celery)

Comice (pear) *Flambée*

Champagne

WINTER

Tortue Verte au Xérès

Sherry

Turbot Poché à la Mode de Hollande

Montrachet

Bécasse (woodcock) Fine Champagne

Chambertin

*Salade d'Oranges**Soufflé Rothschild (with fruit)*

Château Yquem

Ananas (pineapple)

IV

RESTAURANTS DE LUXE

THERE are diners-out who will eat food which they detest rather than order *à la carte* in London's Restaurants de Luxe. Even if the Dîner au Choix makes no appeal to them they will struggle manfully through its less unattractive offerings. Quite rightly, they refuse to pay twice as much for so small a difference in the composition of their meal.

There is, however, such a person as the *maître d'hôtel*, which in plain English usually means Restaurant Manager. If consulted beforehand, this important functionary is often only too glad to be of assistance by preparing alternatives to the fixed price menu. Even at supper itself, and without warning, should you feel a sudden desire for a dish not included in the menu, he will nearly always arrange the matter to your satisfaction. He is worth knowing, is the *maître d'hôtel*, so I have made a point in the following pages of mentioning the names of the more eminent ones, and in the case of smaller restaurants the names of the proprietors, who fulfil the same duties.

How, someone may ask, does one recognise the *maître d'hôtel* among all his variously clothed satellites? Here is the scheme of dress as put into practice in the Restaurants of the First Order:

LUNCH

Restaurant Manager	Morning coat
Assistant Restaurant Manager	Evening dress : black tie and waistcoat
Head Waiters	
Chefs de Rang	
Commis Waiters	White tie and apron

DINNER

Restaurant Manager	Full evening dress : white tie and waistcoat
Assistant Restaurant Manager	Black tie and white waistcoat
Head Waiters	
Chefs de Rang	White tie and black waistcoat
Commis Waiters	White tie and apron

The Restaurant Manager and his Assistant are mainly engaged in receiving guests and attending to their comfort. The Head Waiters, of whom there are, roughly-speaking, one to every twenty diners or six tables, direct the service, which is performed by the Chefs de Rang, of whom there is usually one to every three tables, and the Commis Waiters, who attend to the less important details.

It is perhaps not generally known that the amount of the tip left by a diner-out is written on the bill which he leaves behind on his table, and this is used as a check by the management. The actual money goes into the *tronc*, and two waiters are detailed to take charge of it. It is shared out each week in fixed proportions to the entire waiting

staff with the exception of the commis waiters, who are paid a fixed wage.

Another point. I have often read in the newspapers that cloakroom attendants at smart restaurants "pay £1000 a year for their jobs." This is no more true than a lot that one reads in the newspapers. In point of fact it is sometimes necessary for a cloakroom attendant to take on assistants, and in that case he pays them himself. There is, however, never any question of his "buying his job."

One word more on the question of drinks. The Restaurants de Luxe are most of them permitted to sell alcohol until midnight, and the consumption of drinks already ordered is allowed until 12.30 a.m. One night a week, in many cases, there is an extension night, when drinkers-out may indulge until 2.0 a.m. Owing to the peculiarities of the English law this extension licence has to be applied for afresh each week.

Here, all together, are some of the great "Continental" restaurants of London, ranging from gigantic hotels to dance and cabaret Cafés, smart supper resorts and places to be recommended for a quiet and excellent dinner.

The names of Ritz and Escoffier are linked for ever with that of the SAVOY RESTAURANT, which is approached from a courtyard off the Strand and looks out through wide windows over the Embankment to the Thames. Between them these two men set the fashion which has populated London with hotel restaurants and grills of the Continental pattern. Escoffier, greatest of all chefs, later went to the Carlton. His mantle has now fallen on M.

Latry, who is a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour and is generally considered as London's leading cuisinier. Incidentally, his mother is also a great artist of the kitchen, a Cordon Bleu herself, and when M. Latry visits his home in Gex he is never allowed to interfere with her preparations. His specialities are *Faisan Doré Savoy* and *Poire Commiss Ginette*.

The Savoy is the most self-contained of all London hotels. It has its own bakery; its own water comes from Artesian wells; it has its own laundry; and there is a power house which makes enough electricity to light a town of the size of Stratford-on-Avon.

The Restaurant can seat more than a thousand people. In the decoration white predominates. There are mottled brown pillars and the electric chandeliers are most attractively conceived. Lunch is served at 8/6, and dinner and supper from 17/6 and 15/6 respectively. A cabaret takes place on part of the floor which rises to table height, so that everyone has a clear view. There are three turns at 10.15 p.m. and another three shortly after midnight. Dancing continues ordinarily until about three o'clock in the morning, and there is an extension night on Thursdays. The clientele is smart and cosmopolitan, and there is no handsomer *maitre d'hôtel* than Santarelli with his tall figure and flashing smile.

The kitchen of the Restaurant is kept quite separate from that of the Grill, and it well repays a visit, since M. Latry is an innovator not only in food (he introduced, among other good things, the Mediterranean tunny-fish to London) but in methods of organisation. For instance, waiters giving in an

order press a switch and are immediately connected by microphone with the appropriate department of the kitchen, and all orders are "clocked in," so that a check may be kept on the exact time taken by the kitchen staff in fulfilling them.

From the SAVOY GRILL diners can look out through the plate-glass windows at those alighting from their cars in the courtyard outside. Manetta is the *maître d'hôtel*, and he is personally known to every stage and screen star who has ever visited London. Many people go to the Grill in search of famous faces, of which there are always enough and to spare to be seen.

One of the most persistent arguments in London is waged over the comparative merits of the food in the Restaurant and Grill. M. Virlogeux is the *chef de cuisine* of the latter, and he has many partisans who put his name as high as any in London. In point of fact, both the Restaurant and the Grill are in the very highest class, as every order is cooked fresh for each guest by highly competent specialists.

The Grill is charmingly furnished with a note of modernism. There is no band and evening dress is optional. Everything is *à la carte* with the exception of a Theatre Dinner at 10/6.

The RITZ has long been the most fashionable lunch resort of the West End. Recently it has succumbed to the lure of cabaret, and there is a Café Chantant nightly in the Restaurant. Dancing, at the time of writing, is to Joe Kaye's Band and there is an extension night on Wednesdays. Supper is served from 10.30 p.m. onwards. The *maître d'hôtel* is Aletto, who used to be at Claridge's, and

if you consult him he will prepare you a menu somewhat on these lines :

Consommé Okra

Truite au Bleu

Pauillac Renaissance

Coeur Glacé Sevillaise

Pauillac Renaissance is a young lamb from Bordeaux luxuriously garnished, and *Coeur Glacé Sevillaise* is an ice bomb made with the yolks of eggs and whipped cream, and flavoured with oranges and Grand Marnier. The great advantage of this sweet is that it is not too cold, like the majority of ices, and the flavouring may be varied according to what fruits are in season.

The exquisitely furnished Louis Quinze Restaurant, with its mottled pillars and heavy green curtains looks out through bow windows on to the Greer Park. Owing to the vanity of the fairer sex however, practically no one can be induced to sit elsewhere than by the entrance, where Paris models cannot avoid being seen by everyone on their way in and out. The prices are on the same scale as at the Savoy.

Downstairs in the Grill, the lounge-suited and the quick diners are presided over by Luzio. A Theatre Dinner is served here from 10/6.

Both the CARLTON RESTAURANT and the Grill have long been famous for the unpretentious excellence of their food and wines. I say "unpretentious," for the Carlton never panders to passing fashions merely on account of their novelty. Nothing is allowed to appear on the menu until it has been

tested and approved. As a result, this great hotel attracts gourmets from both sides of the Atlantic and many famous persons can hardly be persuaded to eat elsewhere. The chef is M. Herbodeau, who is a master of the classical French cookery and a worthy successor to Escoffier.

The exquisite Adam Restaurant is presided over by Vilain. It is always popular at lunch, and during the busy times of the year, when there is dancing and a cabaret, it is also much frequented at dinner and supper. Incongruous as it may seem in such stately surroundings, Dwight Fiske once enjoyed an enormous success there with his highly indelicate innuendoes: it is true that many complaints were received by the management. Lunch and dinner are alike chosen *à la carte*, the former at 8/6 and the latter from 10/6 upwards. The wine list is one of the best to be found anywhere. There is a particularly comprehensive selection of Clarets and Hocks.

The CARLTON GRILL is better known even than the Restaurant. It is a white-painted Jacobean room with beautiful china arranged above the panelling. There are deep alcoves which are much patronised by distinguished private parties. There is an open fire at one end of the room on which the grilling operations are performed, and a small kitchen is attached. Most of the cooking, however, is done under M. Herbodeau's direction in the same kitchen which serves the Restaurant.

I could spend much time writing of Charles, the *maître d'hôtel*, but he is almost unique among his kind in being opposed to any form of personal publicity. He tells me that his old customers, royalties, business men or actors, prefer to choose their own

meals from the large menu, or have it chosen for them according to their own taste, and there is therefore no table d'hôte or Dîner au Choix. Here is a typical dinner once designed by M. Charles :

Caviar ou Huîtres
Consommé Yvette
Filet de Sole Cambacérès
Bécasse au Fumet
Salade Coeurs de Laitues
Soufflé Grand Marnier

The soup is a turtle one modified by the addition of chicken broth and *quenelles*; the sauce belonging to the sole is finished with lobster and mushroom; the woodcock is done with brandy and served on a piece of toast adorned with its own liver.

Both Restaurant and Grill are open on Sundays for lunch and dinner.

Smartest of London hotels, CLARIDGE'S, Brook Street, possesses a Restaurant which has every reason to be proud of itself. Since the time of Princess Marina's engagement, when she was seen there daily, it has become particularly fashionable for luncheon. At dinner it is frequented by those, like myself, who find it difficult to watch a floor-show and eat simultaneously. Claridge's has no carbaret, and Geiger's Hungarian Orchestra plays only in the Foyer, where guests sip their sherry before going in to dinner.

Charles Malandra, the king of *maitres d'hôtel*, is in charge of the Restaurant. The decoration here

is austere but sumptuous, and the atmosphere is almost episcopal. There is a *Dîner du Jour au Choix* and a *Dîner à la Carte*. The former is from 15/6. Here is a menu chosen at random :

Saumon Fumé
Petite Marmite Bouchère
Barbue au Vin du Rhin
Le Perdreau du Kent Souvaroff
Coupe Georgette

The partridge, I may mention, is cooked in cocotte and served with *foie gras*, truffles and *croûtons*.

Cuisine, comfort and service are beyond reproach at Claridge's. The wine list includes everything you are likely to ask for. Most of the great ones of the world have eaten there in the course of the last century, and it is frequented by Queens as well as Film Stars. Where the Grill Room now stands was once the private door used by King Edward VII, and Queen Victoria is recorded as having called at the Hotel on one occasion : in point of fact, it was the only hotel which Her Majesty ever visited.

The BERKELEY, 77, Piccadilly, has for many years been a popular resort of the gilded youth of Mayfair. It comprises a Restaurant, a Grill Room and a Buttery. The Restaurant is in the charge of Ferraro, who has lately been in the news as the author of a film scenario. It is entered from Piccadilly through glass revolving doors on which there are lacquered designs. The decoration is as new

as the minute. The ivory colour scheme is relieved by chromium, and the pillars are made of mirror glass. There are gay curtains and always plenty of brightly-coloured flowers. Lunch is served at 8/6, or *à la carte*, and dinner is from 10/6 before the theatre or 15/6 for a longer menu. Supper is at 10/6. There are several printed suggestions every evening, but M. Ferraro is expert at designing special dinners to suit his old customers. Here is a specimen :

Capucini

Consommé Chiffonnette

Langoustines Newburg

Caille Grand Gourmet

Pommes Soufflées

Salade Lorette

Plombière au Kirsch

Friandises

Capucini are a speciality of the Berkeley : they are made with crabmeat and smoked salmon in cocktail with a mayonnaise sauce ; the *consommé* is of chicken with shredded lettuce ; the *langoustines* are cooked with double cream, brandy and sherry ; the quail is plain roasted and served with a salad of celery, beetroot and corn leaves ; *Plombière au Kirsch* is a biscuit ice flavoured with liqueur. The chef is M. Dussert from the Savoy, which is, of course, run under the same management, so that the Berkeley profits from its immense wine cellars. Dancing is to Al Collins' Berkeley Dance Band. There is a cabaret at 10.30 p.m. and 12.30 a.m. On

Wednesday there is a supper extension until 2.0 a.m. Evening dress is insisted upon.

Those of the gilded youth who are indisposed to struggle into tails or dinner jackets may eat in great comfort in the Grill Room, which looks out on to Berkeley Street. There is a green carpet and green-painted chairs, and the chandeliers are exquisite. There is a lunch at 6/6 and dinner at 8/6 or *à la carte*. Cavadini presides.

Farther along Berkeley Street is the Buttery, the opening of which threatens to set a new fashion in eating-places. It is furnished in ultra-modern style with black-topped tables, chairs and settees in tartan cloth, mirrors and chromium fitments. Everything is *à la carte*.

The DORCHESTER, that imposing sky-scraper in Park Lane, has a restaurant which seats no less than a thousand people. It is elegantly decorated with oyster-coloured silk drapings and black-edged mirrors and any portion of it can be shut off at will by curtains. The chef is M. Abel, who is rumoured to be the highest paid culinary artist in the West End; and Pratesi, at the Carlton for more than twenty years, is now *maître d'hôtel* in the Restaurant.

In warm weather lunch is served on the terrace looking out on Hyde Park. There is a dinner in the Restaurant at half a guinea, and for twice that amount you may come to eat and stay to dance and watch the spectacular revue which begins at midnight and lasts for an hour. On gala occasions, of course, the evening's entertainment is considerably more expensive. Evening dress is insisted upon.

The excellence of the cuisine is best illustrated by a supper menu :

*Tortue Claire au Xérès
Brindilles Piquantes*

Suprême de Turbotin Polignac

*Côtelette d'Agneau Maréchale
Salade Rachel*

*Comice Glacée Belle Hélène
Friandises*

The turtle soup is served with cheese straws ; the young turbot has a sauce of white wine and mushrooms ; the lamb cutlets are *sauté* with a *sauce brune*, asparagus tips and *pommes Parisiennes* ; and the sweet consists of pears and ice-cream with a chocolate sauce.

When there is not enough business to justify opening the Restaurant on Sunday evenings, the Band is moved into the Spanish Grill Room, where evening dress is optional. Mostossi, from the Savoy, is the *maître d'hôtel*, and there is a lunch at 7/6 and a dinner at 10/6. The decoration is really remarkable. There are gold and red curtains and a beautiful ceiling. Lunch is served without cloths on the polished tables.

The Silver Restaurant at GROSVENOR HOUSE, Park Lane, is decorated, as its name suggests, with a material that gives the impression of silver foil, and there are glossy curtains to tone. The room is divided by a parapet with steps leading down towards the stage, where a revue is presented on week-days after midnight and on Saturdays at 10.45 p.m. There is a lunch at 7/6 and a dinner at 10/6. Dinner or supper, dance and revue is at an

inclusive price of one guinea. The dancing, which is to Sydney Lipton and his Grosvenor House Band, continues until 2.0 a.m., and there is an extension night on Thursdays. Pastori is the Restaurant Manager. Here is a typical supper menu :

Saumon Fumé
Consommé de la Marmite
Cuisse de Poulet Diablée
Tomates Grillées
Pommes Mignonnette
Coupe Florida
Bon-Bons

The Silver Room is open for lunch only on Sundays.

On Gala Nights, when the price is increased to three guineas, the scene is shifted to the Great Room, originally a skating rink, with its wide balcony and its prodigious floor space. This room is also in much demand for Charity Balls, film shows and so forth.

Grosvenor House possesses, as far as I know, the only Tudor Grill Room in London, but this is mainly frequented by those residing on the premises. There is a lunch at 6/6 and a dinner at 8/6.

The PICCADILLY is famous for its magnificent Louis XIV Restaurant with its fine panelling and gold festoons. However, the Period decoration does not communicate itself to the general atmosphere, which is remarkably gay and modern. There is a lunch at 5/6, Theatre Dinner at 7/6, and dinner and dance at 10/6. The *maitre d'hôtel* is Mazzoni, and the food is excellent. Evening dress

is insisted upon, and there is an extension until 2.30 a.m. on Friday. On Saturday and on Sunday, by the way, there is a *Thé Dansant* at 5/-.

In the Grill Room the imperturbable Vairc presides, and dinner or supper and dance costs only 7/6. Dress is, of course, optional.

The Piccadilly has a great many American visitors, and American specialities figure on the menu. Such are the Corn-on-the-Cob, Corned Beef Hash and Chicken à la King.

There is a cabaret show in the Restaurant at 10.0 p.m., and again at midnight, and dancing is to Billy Gerhardi's Band. In the Grill Room Jerry Hoey supplies the music, and the show is at 9.30 p.m. and at 11.30 p.m.

Somewhere far down below the ground level is a delightful bar which only suffers from the disadvantage of being impossible to find, as it is entered from some cul-de-sac or arcade the whereabouts of which I can never remember.

The MAY FAIR, Berkeley Street, is unusual in that the Grill Room is on the ground floor and the Restaurant downstairs. The latter is pleasantly furnished in silver-grey and adorned with a number of mirrors. The *maître d'hôtel* is Bologna. There is a lunch at 8/6 and a dinner from 12/6. Specialities are *Terrine May Fair*, *Filet de Sole des Gourmets* and *Petites Saucisses au Vin de Pouilly*.

The May Fair provides a band and a cabaret of a very high order. Ambrose played there at one time and no money is spared in securing the services of the best cabaret turns available. The Manager tells me that he has paid as much as £600 a week for a single turn.

Beyond the Grill Room is the Viking Bar, of which I will have a word to say later on.

Many years ago the HYDE PARK HOTEL—both the Restaurant, and the Grill Room—was an extremely popular resort and renowned for the excellence of its cuisine. Lately, however, the magnificent decoration has faded a little and become “dated,” while other restaurants have moved with the times. Only the Grill Room has kept something of its reputation among residents in the neighbourhood.

I am in a position to reveal, however, that a very great change will shortly take place. The new manager, M. Burdet, plans to put the Hyde Park on the map again before the Coronation. “The Restaurant,” he tells me, “with its yellow and blue carpet and its blue-edged mirrors, is one of the most beautiful in London and capable of attracting smart crowds in the evening for dinner and dancing. In summer, when we open the big windows on to the Park, it is almost like being in a garden. We will probably follow the modern custom by having a cabaret late at night when the dinners are over.

“The lounge is beautifully proportioned and has one of the finest fire-places to be found in any London hotel. We intend to do away with the antimacassar atmosphere and make the place really smart and attractive. Downstairs, where the Bar now stands, we are going to have a large and modernistically conceived room rather on the lines of the Berkeley Buttery, where drinks and *à la carte* meals will be served. The plans are already out and we hope to start work shortly.

"The Grill Room, with its fine panelling, is very attractive as it stands, but it, too, will be smartened up. It is fortunate in having a separate entrance straight from the street.

"Our prices will remain the same: lunch from 5/6, Theatre Dinner at 8/6 and full dinner at 10/6 in the Restaurant, where Servais is the *maître d'hôtel*, and lunch at 5/6 and dinner from 7/6 or *à la carte* in the Grill Room. If we have a cabaret in the Restaurant we may have to fix a higher inclusive price after the custom obtaining in other hotels.

"We are going all out on our cuisine. The chef is M. Cahouet, who was second chef at the Ritz, and another expert is coming to us from the Ritz shortly. A particular speciality with us is *Canard à la Presse*."

M. Burdet has said his say, and I personally await with impatience the new régime.

The LANGHAM Hotel, Portland Place, is a stronghold of solid English worth. It is a place where the best people eat the best food in the best surroundings. The Restaurant, a lofty, pillared room in green and rose, is known on the premises as the *Café Anglais*. In the middle of the room there are two flower basins monumentally mounted on pediments, on which light plays from below. There is a lunch at 4/6 and a dinner at 7/6. Ward is the *maître d'hôtel*.

After the cheery atmosphere of the Lounge, with its gay colours and flowers, the marble and gilt *À La Carte* Room frightens you with its impressive grandeur. Only when Messer, the *maître d'hôtel*, comes forward to welcome you do you realise that this is indeed the Langham and not the Victoria and Albert. The food, however, is excellent, or

so many residents in the hotel would certainly not eat there.

There is an orchestra from 7.30 p.m. until 10.30 p.m. in the Lounge, and both Restaurants remain open on Sundays. Evening dress is optional everywhere in the hotel.

The Langham is something of an institution among London restaurants. It was opened by Edward VII, when Prince of Wales, as far back as 1865. Five or six years ago it started a brand new establishment, BOLIVAR, in Chandos Street. This is a Snack Bar and Grill Room much frequented by the young men from the B.B.C. It is furnished in the Spanish style with quaint and amusing wall-paintings of Don Quixote. There is a lunch at 2/6 or *à la carte*, and dinner only *à la carte*. The Grill, which is in the Grill Room itself, specialises in Fillet Steaks, Mixed Grills and *Schachlik Cau-casien*, a Russian dish cooked on a skewer. Other specialities are *Truite Fumée*, *Rizotto à la Bressane* and *Moules Marinière*, mussels in white wine sauce. Mr. Hickman, most intelligent of barmen, presides over a magnificent assortment of drinks in the Snack Bar. Bolivar is closed for lunch on Sundays.

The LONDON CASINO, 11, Old Compton Street, just off Cambridge Circus, is (or so a publicity folder tells me) "the most unique and sumptuous restaurant in the world." Certainly it is the ultimate development of that movement which has made dinner a secondary consideration in the West End.

The London Casino, which was started in April, 1936, is the old Prince Edward Theatre. It is the only restaurant of its kind in London at the time of writing, though a similar one is being

contemplated, and it owes its inspiration to the French Casino in New York. The Managing Director is Mr. Poulsen, who controls also the Café de Paris and The Four Hundred. Everyone should go at least once to the Casino. Diners are accommodated at tables set on the rising tiers of the theatre, or there are some tables beside the dance floor, where the stalls were once upon a time. A monster revue is staged at 8.15 p.m., and again at midnight, or at 11.0 p.m. on Saturdays. The Casino is not open on Sundays.

As for the revue, it is lavish and Continental, and it goes just as far as the Censor will permit. There is an inclusive price of 15/6 on week-days or 17/6 on Saturdays for dinner or supper, dance and show. Gala nights, at special prices, are announced in the Press. Dancing, which is to Jack Harris's Bands, continues until two o'clock, and evening dress is compulsory on the dance floor after 11.0 p.m., except on Saturdays, when closing time is at 12.30 a.m.

The five-course dinner or supper would no doubt be very palatable if one were in a position to give more attention to it, but it is too often served in the dark, while the revue is in progress. Champagnes, of course, predominate on the wine list.

The CAFÉ DE PARIS, 3, Coventry Street, is built like a Hollywood film set. From the wide balcony blue-green stairs curve down to the dance floor on either side of the Band. It is light and airy and gay. Charles, from the May Fair, is the *maître d'hôtel*. Supper is served at a minimum charge of one guinea downstairs or 15/6 on the balcony. Dancing is to Lew Stone's Band and there is a cabaret at

12.30 a.m. throughout the week and midnight on Saturdays. Extension night is on Wednesdays. On Sundays the Café is closed except for a *Thé Dansant*.

Specialities of the Café de Paris are *Mousse de Homard Sauce Américaine*, *Filet de Sole Armagnac*, *Faisan Vigneronne*, which is done with a sauce of grapes, cream and sherry, and *La Poule au Pot Café de Paris*, a soup of the *Petite Marmite* variety made of chicken, beef, veal, and vegetables, and served with cheese and toast. Another soup which will make its appeal to those in search of the exotic is *Queue de Kangaroo au Sherry*. There is a wide selection of Champagnes. Indeed, there has to be, for no one would dream of drinking anything else.

The Café de Paris always has a good cabaret and a good band. It is modern and smart. One of its great advantages is that those not in evening dress may dance on the balcony. Another is that the stairway down to the dance floor provides as good an entrance as any lady could wish for.

Every schoolboy of these precocious times knows how to pronounce the name of QUAGLINO'S, 16, Bury Street, off Jermyn Street. No more than eight years ago small, dapper Quaglino was head waiter at Sovrani's Restaurant. Now, with his brother, he has risen to the pinnacle of fame and success. He has constantly enlarged and extended his business, which has recently been formed into a Company. The decoration at Quaglino's is in the most colourful and exuberant modern style. There are painted mirrors and very pleasant lighting effects. The service is smooth and well organised.

As for food, everything is *à la carte*, and the

prices are those of any restaurant de luxe. That is to say, that a good dinner for two may be had for about 25/-, exclusive of drinks. Here is a specimen dinner for the spring :

Caviar de Sterlet

Tortue Claire

Mousseline de Saumon aux Crevettes Roses

Suprême de Volaille sous Cloche Maison
Salade d'Asperges

Biscuit aux Avelines
Frivolités

Vodka should be drunk with the caviare. Château Margaux 1916 will fittingly accompany the salmon ; Champagne, an Irroy 1923, may be served with the chicken ; and an 1812 Napoleon Brandy will conclude a meal to satisfy even the most notorious of Charity hostesses.

Quaglino is to be congratulated on not troubling his guests overmuch with cabaret. There is but one turn, which comes on at midnight, and it lasts for only about twenty minutes. Dancing continues every night until 2.0 a.m., and the licence is extended until this hour on Wednesdays. On Sundays the entertainment is at 10.0 p.m.

In the kitchen M. Rossignol, perhaps the only bearded chef in London, presides over no less than twelve highly-qualified specialists in each branch of cooking. This great artist helped to build up the fame of Ciro's, and his skill has improved with the years.

For those not in evening dress there is a Grill Parisien next door in the basement. As in the

Restaurant, dancing continues until 2.0 in the morning. The cabaret comes on shortly after midnight.

The SAN MARGO, Devonshire House, just opposite the Ritz, is the most amusingly decorated restaurant in Town. It has been designed by Oliver Messel as a sixteenth century Doge's palace. The colour scheme is in red, pale blue and pink ; there is an illusion of the sun rising behind blinds ; the Grand Canal is dramatically represented by means of light on an uneven surface, which creates the impression of running water ; and there is a most intriguing little balcony with its table laid for a private supper which will never be eaten, as there is no visible means of approach. The lighting is particularly becoming for ladies.

Umberto, the charming *maître d'hôtel* from Ciro's at Monte Carlo and the Café de Paris, will guide your choice from an excellent cuisine. Specialities of the Restaurant are *Scampi Vénitiens*, which are Dublin prawns, *Volaille de Surrey Beauséjour*, or chicken done in casserole with rosemary, and *Crêpes Flambées Mandarinettes*. There is a minimum charge for supper of 12/6.

There is a single cabaret turn on all nights but Thursday, when there is an Amateur Hour, and the standard of entertainment is high. I hear, for instance, that the celebrated Dwight Fiske has been engaged for the Coronation.

The HUNGARIA, 14, Regent Street, really is Hungarian in atmosphere, music, food and wine. The walls are decorated with the crests of various Hungarian "counties," and there is that air of

noisy revelry which one associates, rightly or wrongly, with the aforementioned country. There is a four-course lunch at 5/6 and a gigantic dinner at 12/6. Particularly to be recommended are the little snacks of caviare and what-not which are brought to you as you sip your Martini. Evening dress is essential and Tuesday is extension night.

The Grill downstairs is *à la carte*, and I am inclined to think that the food is slightly superior in this department. Perhaps that is only because you have the choice of such delightful dishes as Trout *à la Tatra*, Hungarian Turbot with onion and tomato and Paprika Chicken with the traditional pink sauce, instead of having French food chosen for you.

From 7.30 in the evening there are gipsy bands in both Restaurant and Grill, but dance bands come on at 9.30 p.m. In the Restaurant there is a cabaret at 10.45 p.m. and midnight, and in the Grill at 10.15 p.m. and 11.30 p.m. Kolopar, the xylophonist, is a great favourite of mine. He leers round the room in the friendliest possible manner while he is doing his turn. Incidentally, the Hungaria was several times visited by the Duke of Windsor as Prince of Wales and King, and many distinguished people are to be seen there.

The wine list deserves a word to itself, as it is sponsored by the Hungarian State as an advertising medium. Every kind of Hungarian wine is to be found on it, and many of them are excellent. There are all sorts of Tokays, ranging back to the year 1889, and there is an insidiously strong beverage called "Bull's Blood." Liqueurs and old brandies are a speciality.

The entrance to the LANSDOWNE RESTAURANT, Berkeley Square, resembles a modernistic tube station. Only the entrance lobby is above ground, and the diner must descend far into the bowels of the earth in search for food and entertainment. The smartly decorated Restaurant supplies a Theatre Dinner, a Dinner and Dance and a Supper, at very moderate prices. It is an amusing feature that Spanish food and wines are a speciality in addition to the ordinary Continental cuisine. Such dishes as *Paella a la Valenciana*, a concoction of chicken and rice, and *Bacalao a la Vizcaina*, which is cod smoked and stewed in oil and tomato, and is very popular in the North of Spain, are rarely met with in London's supper-time playgrounds. For the diner-out de luxe I can recommend the oysters or the *Cornet de Saumon Fumé au Caviare* as hors-d'œuvre, and the Omelette Lansdowne is excellent. Champagne flows in rivers.

The last time I visited the Lansdowne Restaurant the Band was performing an extremely *risqué* number, and the laughter was such that I could hardly concentrate on my food. For the benefit of the drinker-out I may say that the consumption of alcohol is permitted until 12.30 a.m. The Restaurant opens for dinner only on Sundays. There is also a "Farm" Grill Room and a Snack Bar.

ROMANO'S in the Strand, bears the name of a great old Bohemian, Nicolino Alfonso Romano, who was once head waiter at the Café Royal. The Old Roman, as he was called, was known to the whole of Society and of Bohemia, sporting, stage, literary and artistic. He was the friend of

King Edward VII, the Duke of Manchester, the Marquess of Anglesey, Phil May the artist, and his friend "Pitcher." He lent money to half the young bloods of London, and it was seldom repaid.

Well, Romano, with his luxuriant moustache and his celebrated white waistcoat, has been gone now for thirty-six years, sung across Waterloo Bridge to his rest by two Italian bands. His Restaurant, which he enlarged from the original shooting-gallery to a Moorish palace, continues to be something strange and unique among the standardised establishments of the present day. In the entrance lobby there are some charming stencilled impressions of bull-fighting. On the right is the Restaurant with its latticed arches and its painted panels representing the Bosphorus. The *maître d'hôtel* now is Lombart.

Romano's specialises in Russian dishes. There is *Bortsch Koop*, *Filet de Sole Zarina*, which is done with aubergines, *Suprême de Volaille Kievsky*, cooked with sweet onions and mushrooms, and *Bœuf Sauté Stroganoff*. There is also an excellent French cuisine and a very good wine list. The table d'hôte lunch at 3/6 is eaten mainly by advertising people from the neighbourhood; men predominate. The Theatre Dinner at 7/6 attracts many family parties on their way to theatres in the Strand and in Aldwych. After that a more free-and-easy atmosphere comes over the Restaurant. There is a cabaret at 10.0 p.m. and another at midnight, in which the same artists perform in different numbers. Dinner, dance and cabaret costs 10/6, or supper alone 6/6. The traditions of the Restaurant are kept alive by the dance hostesses, who will partner gentlemen on request. There is

an extension night on Wednesdays until 2.0 p.m., and dancing continues ordinarily until about 1.30 a.m. The Restaurant opens for dinner on Sundays.

The CAFÉ ANGLAIS, 20, Leicester Square, under its old title of the Cavour Restaurant, is known to a wide cosmopolitan public. It was here that Rex Evans sang his naughty songs to the delight of social London. The present exotic *décor* and subdued lighting still make their appeal to theatrical and film circles, and the Stage Golfing Club is housed on the premises.

There is a lunch at 5/- and a dinner or supper at 10/6 or *à la carte*. A speciality is the Hay Diet, for those who have sunk so low; for the opposite persuasion there is a Steak and Kidney Pudding on which the management justly prides itself. The *Crêpe Café Anglais* is to be recommended.

There is a cabaret at 10 p.m. and again at midnight. A Tzigane Orchestra plays during dinner and there is dancing to Colombo's Band. Incidentally, the Café Anglais was the first London restaurant to put its Dance Band on the air.

The establishment is closed on Sundays.

The TROCADERO, at the Piccadilly Circus end of Shaftesbury Avenue has been, since the last century, one of the most popular restaurants in the West End. Incidentally, the building is also one of its most distinctive landmarks. The big cream-and-gold Restaurant seats upwards of two hundred. A balcony, with attractive lighting effects below it, runs round it on the first floor and there is a lofty ornamental ceiling. The *maitre d' hotel* is Maurice, who

himself introduces the artists performing in the "Trocabaret" at 10 p.m.; he also entertains in person. Dinner is served at 5/6 (Theatre Dinner), 9/6 and 11/6, and the cuisine, under the direction of M. Jacques Hoerman, is excellent. Here is a menu at 9/6 :

*Grape Fruit
ou
Hors-d'œuvre Choisis
Consommé Riche Cultivateur
ou
Crème Chambrillan
Turbot à la Mode de Bretagne
ou
Blanchailles Diablées
Filet d'Agneau aux Fines Herbes
Pommes Dorées
Poulardine rôtie à la Broche
Salade Continentale
La Pêche glacée Melba
Les Entremets du Buffet
Gaufrettes*

Particularly good is the Turbot, served with a sauce of white wine, lobster and carrots. Another specialty is *Brochette de Filet de Sole Père Monbiot*. There is a very comprehensive *à la carte* menu.

Dancing in the Restaurant takes place on Sunday and Monday, and evening dress is essential for those indulging in this pastime.

More remarkable still is the Grill Room, where Charles B. Cochran presents a miniature revue every night except Sunday, at 11.30 p.m. There is no extra charge and the prices are very reasonable. The chef, by the way, is M. Henri Chambard, who, besides being a *Chevalier du Mérite Agricole*, at one time cooked for the Emperor Haile Selassie. There is a gay carpet in red and green, and mirrors reflect the concealed lighting from the ceiling.

The Trocadero is reputed to have the most extensive wine cellars in London. I need only mention that among the Clarets there is a Château Margaux and a Château Langoa of the 1870 vintage, that there are half a dozen different vintages of Château Yquem, and that it would take at least a quarter of an hour to read through the list of Champagnes.

Restaurant FRASCATI, 32 Oxford Street, is architecturally London's most amazing supper resort. It was originally named after a little village in Italy famous for its wine. It consisted then of what is now the entrance lobby. Krasnopolsky, the proprietor of a well-known restaurant in Amsterdam, bought up the premises and built the edifice which stands to-day. It was then called after him, but its former name was restored when Mr. Frederick Gordon bought it in the 'nineties.

Frascati is London's "floral restaurant." The great baskets of flowers and the towering ferns accord well with the gilded, Palladian style of the Winter Garden and Balcony. The gigantic dome gives a certain air of spaciousness. It is as if one were to dine in the Albert Hall.

Here is a typical dinner menu prepared by the chef, M. Baruteau :

*Huitres de Whitstable au Citron
ou*

Hors-d'œuvre Assortis

Consommé Fermière

ou

Potage Malakoff

Truite de Rivière Meunière

Selle d'Agneau Dubarry

Choufleur au Gratin

Pommes Fondantes

Sorbet Negrita

Poussin Double Rôti au Cresson

Salade Panachée

Puit d'Amour de Fruits Melba

Mignardises

Besides this, there is a smaller Dîner Dansant and a four-course supper from 10 p.m. till midnight. The prices are very moderate considering the size and excellence of the meals. Evening dress is not insisted upon.

An unique feature of Frascati is that there are twenty different cabaret turns a week, and these are all surprise items announced to the clientele at the time of showing. Dancing to a band picturesquely posed on ascending tiers continues until 12.30 a.m. on week-days and until 11 p.m. on Sundays. The dance floor is shaped like a banjo. Professional partners will oblige on request.

Incidentally, it is well worth making a tour of the elegantly furnished banqueting rooms where many gastronomic societies dine regularly. I should also mention that the wine list is one of the largest and finest in London: Immense pains have been taken by the management in their attempts to import the white wine from Frascati, but to no avail. It does not travel.

The CAFÉ ROYAL, Regent Street, is famous in Bohemian circles for its gigantic Brasserie. It is perhaps not so well-known that on the second floor there is one of the most charming restaurants in London, which has a ceiling taken from the old Café started in 1865 by M. Nicols. In reality it was Mme. Nicols who was mainly responsible for building up the fame of the Café Royal in those early days, though her husband has been given all the credit by posterity. M. Nicols himself was an expert on wine, and largely left the management of the cuisine to the lady who survived him when he died in 1897. At about this time the Café was involved in a mysterious crime. M. Martin, the night watchman, was shot to death while engaged on his rounds. His widow, who has completed fifty years of service, still presides in the Dispense Bar on the first floor. Some years ago the Café Royal fell on evil days and virtually passed into the hands of the Bank of England for a time. However, it has now emerged from the crisis under new management and is the favourite resort, not only of the Bohemians, but of business people and journalists. The name of the founder is perpetuated in the letter "N" which is stamped on every single article in use in the whole building.

Peduzzi is the *maître d'hôtel* upstairs. He presides with charm and courtesy over the beautiful Period room with its blue curtains and its blue and buff carpet. There is a Theatre Dinner at 6/6 and a magnificent Dîner au Choix at 8/6. Specialities are Omelette Arnold Bennett, Smoked Haddock Aberdeen, *Crêpe de Volaille Royal* and *Escalope de Veau Maison*.

Half of the Brasserie is devoted in the evening to those strangely and often indeterminately dressed clients who discuss Hindemith or the Spanish War over a glass of lager and a sandwich, while in the other half supper is served *à la carte*. There is, by the way, an excellent lunch at 3/6 here, and a dinner at 5/6. The Restaurant and the Grill Room close about 10.30 p.m., but the Brasserie is open ordinarily until 12.30 a.m. or 1 a.m., and on Wednesdays until 2 in the morning. With its gold and buff walls, its spiral lamps and its painted ceiling it has a genuinely Continental atmosphere. Mr. Young is the *maître d'hôtel*.

The Grill Room, which is enclosed by ornate gilt-framed mirrors, is a replica of the old Grill Room. There is a large Bar on the first floor and a smaller one on the ground floor at the back where Jimmy, London's most charming barman, shakes a cocktail with incomparable grace and remembers everything about all his customers.

LE COQ D'OR Restaurant, Stratton Street, Piccadilly, on the site of the old Blue Train, was recently started by Henri Sartori, late Restaurant Manager at the Dorchester, and E. Berthaud, late *chef de cuisine* of the May Fair. It is furnished in the style of a Provençal Auberge. There are panels of

Toile de Jouy depicting old French scenes. Through from the entrance lounge is the great *broche*, where chickens turn on their spits to the delight of customers in that part of the Restaurant. The speciality of the Coq d'Or is French regional cookery. To be recommended, among many other dishes, are *Poulet à la Broche*, *Agneau à la Broche*, *Coq au Vin Rouge*, which is stewed with mushrooms and onions in the red wine, and *Rambottine* (*quenelles* of pike in lobster sauce). M. Sartori presides in the big L-shaped Restaurant, and M. Berthaud, the chef, also walks round from time to time in his white hat advising customers on the resources of his kitchen. Everything is *à la carte*, but the prices are very moderate for such an incomparable cuisine. The *plat du jour* is from 3/- to 4/6, so that a very good dinner may be had for 10/-.

Le Coq d'Or specialises in Red Bordeaux and Red Burgundy. There is a Château Margaux 1904 and a Chambertin or a Musigny 1881. The sommelier is the celebrated M. Hénocq from the Hermitage at Le Touquet.

I do not wish to commit myself to saying which is or which is not the best restaurant in London. I will say only that in my opinion there is no better one than Le Coq d'Or. The food and the sauces are sound and admirable, and dishes are served only when they are in season. M. Berthaud avoids the gallimaufry of expensive and incompatible flavours which is too often a feature of the cooking in London's restaurants de luxe. Yes, there is no doubt about it. One eats well at Le Coq d'Or.

It is open, by the way, on Sundays.

Should you stand in need of the services of the

Consul for the Republic of San Marino, he is to be found at SOVRANI's Restaurant and Bar, 163 Knightsbridge. Bearded, distinguished-looking, Sovrani has been everywhere. He was at the Berkeley, at the Savoy and in New York before starting his own restaurant, Sovrani's, in Jermyn Street. From there he moved to the Blue Train in Stratton Street, where Le Coq d'Or now stands, and to-day he has moved out westwards to the fringe of fashionable London.

His new restaurant is elegantly furnished with *rouge Cardinal* settees, blue table-cloths and Victorian paintings. With his unrivalled experience he is able to provide an exceptionally fine and beautifully served dinner. He needs appreciation, however, to spur him to his finest efforts, and it is worth while consulting him about the choice of your meal. He is always ready to say what is good and what is not so good. Here is the menu of a dinner which a king might eat with pleasure :

Huitres Natives
Croûte au Pot
Filet de Sole Sovrani
Mignonnette de Bœuf Diane
Crêpe Suzette
Café

This menu needs no explanation, unless it is to say that the sole is done with a sauce of white wine and mushrooms. The bill, for two persons, will amount to 25/- exclusive of wines and liqueurs. Silver dishes are used for the cooking, and wine and

liqueur flavours create a rich simplicity. Some of the specialities of the house are *Moules Marinière* (mussels in a sauce based on dry white wine), *Filet Mignon de Bœuf* (thin fillet fried in butter) and *Omelette Sovrani*, which is prepared with cream, Sauce Béchamel and grated cheese. On the wine list I note particularly the Vouvray (to drink with your oysters), the Riesling and the Clicquot Rosé or pink Champagne, a drink calculated to satisfy the inner woman.

Should you be drinking at the Bar, I advise a nibble at the prawns, which are quite delicious. The Restaurant is open on Sundays.

Restaurant BOULESTIN, 25 Southampton Street, off Covent Garden, is famous wherever gourmets meet together for its individual style of rich, exquisitely flavoured cooking. The specialities are *Omelette Boulestin*, *Foie Gras aux Raisins*, *Poulet Rôti Flambé* and *Crêpes Verlaine*. It boasts also a very fine collection of Clarets and Burgundies and you will be unlucky if you cannot find the spirit or liqueur that you want among the exotic assortment on the wine list.

The decoration is particularly notable, as there are panels by Marie Laurencin and J. E. Laboureur and the curtains are by R. Dufy. Boulestin is one of the few restaurants in London which have gone to the trouble and expense of creating an individual and wholly artistic atmosphere for its clients.

Be under no misapprehension about the prices. True, there is a table d'hôte dinner on Sunday at 8/6, and there is a Theatre Dinner up till 8 p.m. at 7/6. Otherwise, however, lunch costs about 10/-, and a good dinner at least 15/- a head, exclusive of

wines and liqueurs. I will say only this, that if you can afford it, it is your duty to dine here at least once, for whenever the subject of dining-out is discussed in London the name of Boulestin is the first to be mentioned. The restaurant, by the way, is closed for lunch on Sundays.

Tout ce qui vient de la mer is the motto of PRUNIER, 72, St. James's Street, and I have all too little space to sing the praises of this remarkable establishment. For many years, whenever I have arrived in Paris towards dinner time, it has been my custom to call a taxi and direct the driver to the Rue Duphot or, alternatively, the Avenue Victor Hugo. Now that Prunier has come to us in London, it is no longer necessary to go to Paris. A penny bus ride brings all the fishes of the sea to your plate.

When Alfred Prunier first went into business in 1872 he dispensed only oysters and grills. In 1903 a campaign against oysters was instituted, and it was necessary for the restaurant to alter its policy. It became a fish restaurant, and it was only in 1923 that the oyster situation was finally settled by the granting of a certificate.

The London house of Prunier specialises in oysters, and no less than ten different kinds are listed on the menu. It is worth remembering that of these the *Belons* may be eaten until the end of June. If you do not care for oysters plain, you may eat them in at least seven different disguises.

You are not likely to eat as much as this, but I cannot resist giving the menu of a lunch held in honour of the publication of a book by Michel Bouzy, Madame Prunier's *chef de cuisine*.

Here it is :

Les Fruits de Mer

Crabes diables

Filets de Sole Émile Prunier

Le Bar farci et accommodé à la manière Angevine

Faisans rôtis flanqués de Cailles aux marrons

Salade de saison

Fromages

Les Pêches Melba

telles que le Maître A. Escoffier les créa

Une Corbeille garnie de Friandises

Les grands Anjou du côteau du Layon

(Clos de l'Aiglerie)

Gevrey Chambertin 1915

Champagnes Perrier-Jouet et Lanson

Café spécial Malgache

Liqueur Cointreau

Two non-fish specialities of the house are Saddle of Lamb with Truffles and Stilton Cheese treated with Port and Brandy. The fish are too numerous to be detailed, but nearly all are excellent.

As for wines, Barsac, Anjou, Vouvray, Chablis and Sauternes are served at 1/6 a glass, and many excellent and unusual vintages figure on the list.

The prices are fairly reasonable, and the diner is never pressed to spend more than he can afford. There are several *plats du jour*, among which I recommend the daily *Poisson du Chef*, which is an ordinary fish extraordinarily well cooked at 3/-. From 5.30 to 6.30 p.m. you may indulge in a

Degustation Hour for 3/6. The restaurant is closed for lunch, but open for dinner, on Sundays.

LÀ MAISON BASQUE, 11 Dover Street, is famous for its Chablis. In fact, it has one of the finest and most exclusive wine lists in London. Here is a typical dinner :

Caviar

Consommé Solange

Truite Belle Meunière

Caille Souvaroff

Macédoine de Fruits

Café

The trout is served with mushroom and tomato, and the quail is stuffed with *foie gras* and truffles and garnished with pieces of these, some sherry and *jus lié*. As for the price, if you are dining with a friend the bill will come to about £2 5/- without reckoning the wine. Yes, this is one of the most expensive restaurants in London and one of the best. It is succinctly described on the sign outside as *Restaurant Français du Premier Ordre*. Within, it is decorated by a variety of beautifully shaped old bottles standing in serried rows above the panelling. The service is adequate but a little languid.

The Restaurant AU JARDIN DES GOURMETS, 5 Greek Street, enjoys as high a reputation for good food as any house in London. If you can imagine such a thing, it is decorated exactly like a gourmet's garden. The wall is painted to represent a garden, that is to say, and there is something about the green

and red colour scheme which makes your mouth begin to water even before the menu is brought. Eating is only *à la carte*, and some of the specialities are *Kébab à l'Orientale*, *Délices de Sole Maison*, done with a white wine sauce and cream, and the delicious *Fonds d'Artichaut François Villon*, which are prepared with a cheese sauce. The wine is on the same level as the cooking, which is to say a great deal. As for the prices, they are, of course, high, and a good dinner for two, exclusive of drinks, costs about 25/-, but it is 25/- well spent. The service alone is worth that: it is matchless. M. Silvy is the proprietor.

The restaurant is open for lunch and dinner on Sunday.

L'APÉRITIF GRILL, 102 Jermyn Street, is a comparatively recent venture of Quaglino, whose eponymous restaurant I have discussed above. It is no better on the face of it than half a dozen similar establishments in the West End, yet it has that something more, that note of modernism, that elegance which causes it to jump to the mind when you have plenty of money, a fair companion and a hankering for the exotic excellence of food to which the union of France and Italy gives birth.

Eating is *à la carte*, and the prices are slightly cheaper than at Quaglino's. L'Apéritif is open for dinner on Sundays.

Everyone who knows Monte Carlo knows QUINTO'S. A short time ago Victor, who is Quinto's brother, started a branch of the famous establishment at Arlington House, Arlington Street. With the light shining out through its pink curtains

Quinto's looks most enticing, and the diner-out who ventures to cross its monumental threshold will not be disappointed. The decoration has a modern simplicity, there is concealed lighting in the ceiling and the room is air-conditioned.

M. Victor does not believe in speciality dishes. On his menu is to be found whatever is in season at the moment, and the chef, M. Marcel, is a very capable performer at both French and Italian cooking. Dishes are cooked only on the order of the customer. There is no table d'hôte, and the price of a good dinner for two, exclusive of drinks, is about 25/-. Only wines bottled in France are sold.

There is no music or cabaret at Quinto's, but the food is good enough to justify their absence. The restaurant opens on Sunday evenings.

One of my favourite restaurants is the HANOVER, 6 Mill Street, Hanover Square. It is Victorian to a degree. The walls are adorned by female figures, inadequately draped, in a setting of gold and brown. There is a beautiful painted ceiling and the chairs, upholstered in rose to match the carpet, are both lovely and comfortable. There are only about ten tables in all. The twin genii of the Hanover are MM. Vivari and Louis. They provide a lunch at 3/6 and a dinner at 5/6. Here is a spring menu designed by M. Vivari :

Cocktail de Homard Aurore

Oeuf Moellé Tourengele

Suprême de Volaille Lucullus

Salade Aida

Coupe de Fraises Empire

Frivolités

The Cocktail is done with mayonnaise, tomato and a dash of sherry ; the egg is in pastry with a *purée* of mushrooms and red wine sauce ; the chicken is served with truffles on a maize *croquette* ; the salad consists of artichokes and asparagus tips ; and the strawberries are served with Port, pineapple and whipped cream. "No," says M. Vivari, "this meal will not cost you 5/6. It will cost you 6/6." The ordinary 5/6 dinner, by the way, is so large that I have never yet succeeded in tackling all the courses.

The cooking is English in its simplicity and French in its elegance, and the service is swift and unobtrusive. A smaller room on the ground floor is used when the Restaurant is full, and upstairs there is the Paderewski Room, where the great pianist always dines when he is in London.

The wine list is excellent, but not as excellent as it might be. No mention is made, for instance, of the Jeroboams of Château Lafite of the 1874 vintage, which have been in the cellar for thirty years. The business is a personal one, and chance customers are not told of such marvels. I can recommend, however, the Clos de Vougeot 1923 or the Sweet Tokay of 1900, which both appear on the list. The restaurant is open for dinner on Sundays.

The *décor* in silver and three shades of pink lends a Parisian atmosphere to LE PERROQUET, 43 Leicester Square, where M. Bellometti presides over an excellent French cuisine. Specialities of this restaurant are *Cocktail de Crevettes*, *Truite Ouverte au Beurre*, *Ris de Veau aux Pointes d'Asperges* and *Suprême de Volaille sous la Cloche*, which is the breast and winglet of a chicken floured and lightly

fried in butter and finished with wine and brandy and double cream. As a sweet I recommend the *Poire Marie Brizard*. The price of a dinner for two is about 25/-.

The wine list is a good one. I will mention only the Château Cheval Blanc 1925, the Chambertin 1923 and the Meursault Goutte d'Or 1923. There is a superb selection of champagnes.

The restaurant is closed on Sundays.

In the whole of London there is no place where I would rather work off a good appetite than at QUO VADIS, 27 Dean Street. Pepino Leoni, the proprietor, head chef, head waiter and manager, has risen from the rank of *commis* waiter, and there is nothing which he does not know about food. Each year he roams the Continent in search of new dishes, and he exchanges recipes with the Rôtisserie Périgordine in Paris. He is a specialist in exotic and unusual food. He is also the best of hosts and always ready with a special cocktail of Strega and Italian Vermouth for his old customers. Here is a dinner menu which he once composed for me :

Saumon Fumé

Crème Santé

Sole à la Verdi

Poussin Geraldina

Zabaglione

Café

Leoni's is just about the best smoked salmon in Town ; *Crème Santé* is a delicious soup made with lake sorrel ; *Sole à la Verdi* is served on green

tagliatelle, a kind of noodle cooked with spinach ; *Poussin Geraldina* is done with red wine ; and *Zabaglione* is beaten egg flavoured with Marsala. The price of a five-course dinner chosen *à la carte* is 5/6, but many "chance" customers do not know of this arrangement. Other special dishes are *Filetto di Pollo Delysia*, breast of chicken with a delicious sauce, *Pigeon à la Rozier* and, as a sweet, *Orange Erminia*. On the wine list I take off my hat to a Château Filhot 1923 and a Château Carbonnieux 1921, among others. There is a good selection of Italian wines if you like Italian wines. I myself like to drink them in Italy but not in England, as they do not travel well.

Quo Vadis is decorated with a picture gallery founded by Edward Craig, Ellen Terry's grandson, and customers are at liberty to buy the exhibits. The restaurant is open on Sundays.

ISOLA BELLA, 15 Frith Street, which was founded in 1908, set the fashion for pictorial decoration in Soho. The green curtains and the panels by well-known artists make for a gay and intimate atmosphere. The cuisine is predominantly French, though there are Italian specialities. Many per-spacious gourmets frequent this restaurant, and James Agate, the dramatic critic, has even gone so far as to write an appreciation of it in Provençal. Here are some of the dishes for which it is noted : *Délice de Sole Isola Bella* (fillet of sole braised in white wine and sherry with mushrooms and tomatoes and scented with juice of truffles), *Civet de Homard Bourguignotte* (sliced lobster with a sauce of old Burgundy and brandy, served with mushrooms, button onions and puff paste *fleurons*), *Suprême de*

Widgeon à l'Orange (wild duck with orange and potato in a sauce of red currant jelly, Port, butter and orange juice) and *Jambon Braisé à la Ceresella* (braised ham with Champagne sauce, blended with juice of truffled and stewed red cherries). As a savoury there is *Canapé de Foie Gras Maison*, which is done with truffles, brandy and grilled almonds.

There is a lunch of three courses *au choix*, and dinner for four persons or more is at 5/-, 6/6 or 7/6. The last of these comprises six courses and coffee, and it is a tribute to the chef that so much may be eaten without satiety.

The cooking deserves a word to itself. In spite of the number of flavours used in each dish, there is never the slightest confusion. Use of fresh butter and the finest oil in frying, and good wines and brandy in the composition of the sauces, gives a cleanliness and delicacy which is all too seldom found in London. The proprietor, P. Micotti, has recently revised his wine list and, though small, it now includes most of the very finest French and Italian wines. There is a particularly good choice of Clarets : I recommend, besides the *premiers crus*, a Château Léoville-Lascases or a Château Pontet-Canet of the 1928 vintage. The restaurant is open all day on Sundays.

V

RESTAURANTS OF THE NATIONS

VERY many different countries have their representative restaurants in London. These are mostly in Soho or North of Oxford Street, along Charlotte Street, as far as Fitzroy Square. The grander ones have gradually forsaken their national dishes in favour of the French, and their prices have risen accordingly. Some of these have therefore been included in the chapter on " Restaurants de Luxe."

I have endeavoured to present a selection, made without prejudice, from the restaurants of the leading gastronomic countries. My list is by no means comprehensive, but the great number of French and Italian restaurants, as opposed to the others, makes comprehensiveness impracticable.

It is a mistake to be dogmatic about food. French cooking may be the best that there is, but that is no reason why it should be eaten always. It is sometimes amusing and instructive to sample the delights of an unknown cuisine. Almost every country has some dish, or range of dishes, in which it is unsurpassed, and these dishes taste better cooked in the national style than " dolled up " to bring them into line with the menu of a smart restaurant.

Allons !

FRENCH

L'ESCARGOT BIENVENU, 48 Greek Street, specialises in snails, frogs and mussels. Other special dishes are *Crêpe de Volaille*, *Carbonnade Flamande* and *Civet de Lièvre*. It is the Frenchest of all French restaurants : the diner is almost compelled to take his conversation grammar along with him.

The premises are of great interest, for L'Escargot is situated on what was once the property of the Duchy of Portland. There is a fine porch, a staircase, several ceilings, and a cockpit which may be seen by the curious visitor. The restaurant once had a branch on the other side of the street, but this is now closed.

Among wines, vintage Burgundies are a speciality, and there is a good Vin Rosé d'Anjou, one of the most delightful of dinner wines. As a liqueur I can recommend the Eau de Vie de Framboises.

Lunch and dinner are alike *à la carte*, and as an indication of the price I will only say that a very excellent dinner for two may be had for about 15/- . The restaurant is open on Sundays.

LE MOULIN D'OR, 27 Church Street, has, I believe, been longer under the same management than any other restaurant in Soho. It is extremely popular with Americans, many of whom think it has the best French cuisine in London. The atmosphere is quiet and peaceful, and conducive to the enjoyment of a good meal. There is a six-course lunch at 3/- and an even more substantial dinner at 4/6. *Spécialités de la Maison* are the *Hors d'œuvre des Gourmets*, *Filet de Sole Moulin d'Or*, *Suprême de*

Poulet Malmaison, *Moules Marinière* and, strangely enough, Tripe and Onions with Jacket Potatoes. Every day there are two special *plats*.

A thing to remember about Le Moulin d'Or is that it is open for supper until midnight. Special meals can be arranged at a *prix fixe*. Lunches and dinners are served on Sundays.

KETTNER'S is one of the old original French restaurants in London. It has a curious history. Kettner, who came from Alsace, was himself the chef. After his death his wife married the Italian head waiter, just to keep things in the family. The restaurant acquired a good name for excellent food in quiet surroundings. Some years ago it shattered this reputation by going in for music and cabaret and Heaven knows what. Now the quiet surroundings have come back again and, better still, the prices have been reduced. Lunch is at 4/6 and dinner at 7/6. It is not cheap yet, certainly, but the food is first class. Kettner's is open on Sundays.

Now let us suppose that your companion for the evening has made that by no means original remark : "Don't let's go anywhere *smart*. Let's go to some little place where they have *marvellous* cooking quite *cheap*." Well, let's go : it is not as impossible as it sounds. We will dine CHEZ LE PÈRE OBER AU PETIT COIN DE FRANCE, 7 Carnaby Street, which runs parallel to Regent Street on the east side. The restaurant consists of four little rooms, one on top of the other, and each with decoration appropriate to its rather fanciful name. There are four or five specialities for every day of the week. I

will mention only the *Fricandeau de Veau Farci au Jambon*, which comes to table on Tuesday, and the *Civet de Lièvre Bourguignon*, *Nouilles Sablées à l'Alsacienne*, or jugged hare with red wine sauce and noodles, which is as good a dish as you will meet with in a month of Fridays. The *Pâté Truffé Maison*, the *Rillettes de Tours*, the *Marrons au Sirop Vanille* and many another delicacy, for which I have now no space, must be eaten to be believed.

As for wine, I have room only for the Malmsey 1855. This should be drunk after the meal and it is a wine guaranteed to bring tears of joy to the eyes of the most hardened gourmet. The prices, in general, are so absurdly cheap as to make you blink when you see your bill. In fact, *Vive le Père Ober!* He is that philanthropic old gentleman who is always to be seen climbing up and down the stairs in his white chef's hat to attend personally to the comfort of his clients.

The *Petit Coin* opens on Sunday evenings.

ANTOINE, 40 Charlotte Street, is distinguished by the fact that in summer tables are laid outside on the pavement in the shade of four potted bay trees. I consider that the lunch at 2/- or 2/6 and the dinner at 3/- or 3/6 are the best value in London, since there is a choice of half a dozen dishes or more for each course, and the standard of cooking is remarkable.

On the *à la carte* menu, the lobster, however cooked, is well worth eating as it is killed fresh for each order. Other fine dishes are *Bouillabaisse*, *Osso Buco* and *Fritto Misto*. There is an Italian, as well as a French chef. *Vin Rosé* is served in carafes, half carafes and *babies*. These last contain

two glasses, or just enough to wash down a good lunch. The restaurant opens on Sunday evenings.

The RENDEZVOUS, 45 Dean Street, has a table d'hôte lunch at 3/- and a dinner at 4/6, or should you wish to dine à la carte hors d'œuvre is a speciality as are *Sole Rendezvous* and *Poulet en Cocotte*. Wine is served *en carafe*. The restaurant has an enviable reputation and should be visited by those people who make a point of "knowing of a little place in Soho." It is open on Sundays.

FILLIEZ, Frith Street, is a newish restaurant which has already gained a well-merited popularity. The proprietor managed for eleven years the wine and cigar department at Frascati's. Here is a typical menu of his :

Véclouté de Tomates
Truite grenobloise
Foie de Veau au Lard
Crêpes au Citron
Café

This magnificent meal à la carte costs only a trifle over 4/-. The trout is fresh and nicely served and the liver and bacon is delicious. Filliez is open on Sunday.

CHEZ VICTOR, 45 Wardour Street, deserves especial praise for its modest but excellent cuisine. Chefs go there on their evenings out. The *Pot au Feu* is notable, as are the omelettes and the *Coquilles au Gratin*, and whenever I dine there I choose as a sweet *Cerises à l'Eau de Vie*, which is a wonderful

preparation for a good cup of coffee. Some fine wines may be sent out for, and the restaurant is open on Sunday.

ITALIAN

GENNARO's, 63 New Compton Street, is an astonishing place. It consists of room after room, all furnished in the most extravagant manner with mirrors, lamp-shades shaped and coloured like birds and I hardly know what else. There is a continuous hum of activity. Flowers are distributed with great *empressement* to all ladies visiting the restaurant.

The menu is comprehensive, but I may mention that *foie gras* is served at 1/6, and that there is an excellent *Bouillabaisse all' Italiana*, a *Ravioli al Sugo* and a *Frittata aux Pointes d'Asperges*. A speciality is Pancake Gennaro. For Heaven's sake, be careful how you order : a single dish is enough for anyone but a stevedore. The prices are microscopic.

Recommended wines are the Vin Rosé du Ricey Clos Robin at 3/9, and the Conegliano "Riesling," at 4/-. Gennaro's, thank goodness, is open on Sundays.

PAGANI'S, 42 Great Portland Street, has an entrance as imposing as any restaurant in London. Coloured lights twinkle on the arched doorways, inviting the diner-out to enter and try his luck. He will find—an unusual arrangement this—a lunch only *à la carte* and a table d'hôte dinner at 7/6. Downstairs there is a restfully undecorated room with square wooden pillars serving as coat-stands,

and upstairs there is a gayer affair furnished in red and white.

The specialities of the house are Mussels *Marinière*, *Filet de Sole Pagani*, done with cheese, mussels and shrimps, *Osso Buco Milanaise*, *Fritto Misto* and $\frac{1}{2}$ *Poulet Pagani*, which is cooked in casserole with mushrooms and button onions, and served with a Madeira sauce.

Pagani's was started as an ice-cream shop over sixty years ago by the Italian whose name it bears. It has always been the resort *par excellence* of the musical world. Upstairs there is the Artists' Room, which is decorated with sketches made by Enrico Caruso and with sheets of paper behind glass on which are scrawled the signatures of over five thousand people, many of them exceedingly famous. I need only mention Sir Henry Irving, Dame Nellie Melba, Tosti, Paderewski, Toscanini, Clara Butt, Maurice Chevalier and Grace Moore. The proprietors of the restaurant for more than thirty years, have been Arthur Meschini and his mother, Linda Meschini. Pagani's is open on Sundays.

The FLORENCE, 53 Rupert Street, has been in existence for fifty years. Therefore, although it is an Italian restaurant, it has gained quite an English atmosphere. It has a magnificent and lavishly ornamented dining-room in white and blue, with pink-upholstered chairs in the modern manner. The walls are adorned with countless mirrors. The proprietor is M. Menti, who also owns Romano's in the Strand. There is a five-course lunch *au choix* for 3/6 and a seven-course dinner, a prodigious affair, for 5/-. As an hors-d'œuvre I recommend *Mortadella*, a delicious

sausage from Bologna. The Florence specialises in Burgundies, Moselles and Hocks. Among Champagnes, there is a Special Vintage Bollinger 1928 and a fine shipment of George Goulet 1920. Italian wines are also served.

The Florence does a big business in banqueting, and there are no less than six rooms always in demand. It is open for lunch and dinner on Sundays.

PINOLI's stretches between Wardour Street and Rupert Street on the south side of Shaftesbury Avenue. It was opened in 1869 and was one of the first Continental restaurants in London to achieve distinction. Nowadays it specialises in supplying huge meals at rock-bottom table d'hôte prices, and it is frequented by those who rate quantity as high as quality. The cooking, which is both Italian and French, is plain and admirable.

Lunch is at 2/6, dinner, which comprises six courses, at 3/9 and supper at 3/-.

BERTORELLI, 19 Charlotte Street, is managed by the two brothers of that name who founded it in 1913. The phenomenal popularity of this restaurant (it serves between seven and eight hundred people a day) is based on quick service and value for money. There is no table d'hôte but a most substantial meal may be had for 2/6. The menu is a large one. *Minestrone* costs 5d., Lamb Cutlets and Peas 1/2, *Scaloppine al Marsala* 1/8 and *Spaghetti à l'Italienne* 8d. There are three specially recommended dishes every evening.

An unusual feature of this restaurant is that 95 per cent of the wines are shipped by the proprietors themselves. The Chianti is excellent at

4/- a litre, and there is a good Vin Rosé at 2/2 a carafe. There is a judicious selection of other French wines, especially Claret.

Bertorelli consists of six largish rooms simply decorated in pale green. The clientele is predominantly Bohemian. It is open all Sunday.

The RESTAURANT D'ITALIE, 36 Greek Street, is the oldest Italian restaurant in London. It was originally situated where the London Casino now stands, and in those days it was very much larger than it is now. The proprietor, A. Martelli, is proud of the fact that he keeps his old customers. One lady has come there for dinner every night, including Sunday, for the last thirty years. There are pleasant green curtains in the restaurant, and a distinctive touch is supplied by sculptured figures in niches in the walls.

Value for money is the keynote of the Restaurant d'Italie. It has a four-course lunch at 2/6 and a six-course dinner at 3/9. The choice of dishes for each of these tables d'hôte is tremendous, and only the most captious diner-out will fail to find what he wants. If the table d'hôte is mainly French the *à la carte* menu is almost exclusively Italian. I advise you to make a note of the *Minestrone*, *Fritto Misto*, *Scaloppine al Pomidoro* and *Pollo Cacciatora*, which is chicken cooked in a peculiarly delicious way. The restaurant is fully licensed, and Chianti is a speciality. It is closed for lunch on Sunday.

The RISTORANTE DEL COMMERCIO, 63 Frith Street, is a modest two-room establishment which serves genuine Italian food and not, like most of its kind,

a mixture between Italian and French. The customers come mostly from the fringes of the artistic and literary world, and it is refreshing to hear Picasso or the Sitwells discussed at a neighbouring table as if they had only just this minute been discovered.

Commercio is a family establishment, and it is therefore extremely cheap. Signor Prevedini is the proprietor and to his credit be it said that he has never once given me an indifferent meal. A dinner to eat here is the thick national soup *Minestrone*, *Scaloppine al Marsala*, which is a veal dish best accompanied by spaghetti, *Zabaglione* or *Crêpes à la Dilke* (pancakes served with honey) and coffee. There are some quite passable Italian wines at 4/- or 5/- a bottle. Commercio is always open and will prepare you a meal at the most extraordinary times.

SPANISH

Smartest, and as a matter of fact most expensive, of the Peninsular restaurants is MARTINEZ, 25 Swallow Street. You are ushered by an impressive commissionaire up some narrow steps and find yourself in an almost exorbitantly Spanish atmosphere. The white and green decoration, the barred windows, the little barrels of sherry indicate at once that you have crossed the Pyrenees. Even the waiters, who for all I know to the contrary come from Balham or Hackney Wick, appear to speak a fluent Castilian.

Paella a la Valenciana is the speciality, a gigantic dish of chicken, rice, mussels, chillies and the like. One portion, generally speaking, is sufficient for

about a dozen moderate eaters. The rice, by the way, is exceptionally well prepared, being neither too oily nor too dry. Another dish which is well worth eating in this restaurant is *Chile con Carne* which, in non-Spanish restaurants, is apt to appear in the guise of Heinz Baked Beans, liberally peppered on spongy toast. Two excellent sweets are Spanish Nougat, for strong teeth only, and quince cheese, formed into compact rectangles and called *Dolce de Membrillo*.

The sherry is matchless, and I can advise white Valdepeñas as a beverage wine. You may smoke an excellent green cigar. Your dinner will cost you about 6/-, and the restaurant is open on Sundays.

Señor Bonafont, who presided for many years over the diners at Martinez, has now opened a restaurant of his own, MAJORCA, 15 Brewer Street, behind the Café Royal. The decoration, which is by J. Duncan Miller, is startling but effective. There is a cottage bar, and scenes of Majorcan life adorn the walls. In the front part of the restaurant there is a strange edifice, reminiscent of the first flying machine, the purpose of which I have never been able to discover.

Señor Bonafont has brought his chicken-and-rice dish with him from across the way, and there is also *Arroz a la Marinera*, in which lobster, mussels and other fish are harmoniously blended. Majorca also supplies one of the best sweets in London, a modest dish which usually lurks on the bottom tray of the waiter's trolley. It is an orange candied with its skin, and it is called *Orange en Almibar*. I will tell you no more. Go and try it!

As for wines, you will not go far wrong on the

Marques de Murrieta 1925. For the more humble purse, I can vouch for the Ederra and the Valdepeñas.

Majorca provides a four-course lunch at 2/9 and a five-course dinner at 4/-. It is open on Sundays.

BARCELONA, 17 Beak Street, is a favourite haunt of mine. In summer it is cool and shady, and there is some white wine on draught which is admirable at its price. It is served in attractive carafes with a long spout and a pointed handle serving as an inlet for the air. There is a magnificent cold soup, made from olive oil, cucumber and tomato, and served with little pieces of toast, called *Gaspacho*, and the *Tamales a la Méjicana*, mince and potato wrapped up in maize leaves and swimming in a hot sauce, are particularly good. You may dine well at Barcelona for 2/6. It opens all day on Sundays.

At CERVANTES, 18 Old Compton Street, there are two specialities every day, and it is the pride of the management that any one of these makes a complete meal.

For me, there is always an atmosphere of intrigue about this restaurant. Señor Largo Caballero was to be seen there every day shortly before the Spanish Revolution broke out. Usually, however, when one sees dark-skinned plotters bending their heads together over a table, they turn out to be stockbrokers discussing the boom in rubber.

The average cost of a meal at Cervantes is 2/6. Not only is it open on Sundays, but the special

dish served on that day is a most palatable *Langouste à l'Américaine*. In the afternoons, chocolate is served with Spanish pastries.

GERMAN

A welcome addition to the national restaurants of London is KEMPINSKI'S, 99 Regent Street, the entrance being actually in Swallow Street. M. Bieri, late of Sovrani's Blue Train Restaurant, will help you to choose such Teutonic delicacies as *Rinderbrust*, *Holsteiner Schnitzel* or *Kassler mit Sauerkraut und Kartoffelbrei*. In case you do not speak German, these are respectively boiled beef, veal escallops and smoked loin of pork with sour cabbage and mashed potatoes. However, it is by no means necessary to confine yourself to such homely fare. Here is a specimen menu :

Crayfish Cocktail
Garnished Sweetbreads
Partridge, Cream Sauce and Pineapple
Cherry Tart
Moka

The Crayfish is served raw with a sauce composed of onion, tomato, cream, lemon, chopped parsley, tabasco and pepper. The sweetbreads are prepared with potato balls and cauliflower on artichoke bottoms *à la Hollandaise*. The partridge and the cherry tart explain themselves. The price will be about 11/6. A satisfying dinner may, however, be had for no more than 5/-.

Kempinski's of Berlin are famous for their Hocks and Moselles, and for their own special German Champagne. You will do well to take the advice of the wine waiter. The restaurant is open on Sundays.

When it was founded at the beginning of this century SCHMIDT'S, 41 Charlotte Street, consisted of four marble-topped tables approached through a sausage shop. To-day it seats three hundred people at a time and there are two smart entrances. In spite of this, however, the old customers still prefer to enter through the Delikatessen Store where old Herr Schmidt presides over the smoked meats and sausages. The restaurant specialises, not only in German, but in Austrian and Hungarian cooking. Typical dishes are *Norddeutscher Schmorbraten* (braised beef garnished with vegetables) at 1/9, *Eisbein mit Kraut und Kartoffeln* (knuckle of pork, cabbage and potato) at 1/6, *Deutsches Huhn mit Reis* (chicken and rice with *sauce suprême*) at 1/9 and *Wiener Schnitzel* at 2/-. I recommend as a sweet the *Apfelstrudel*, which is made to perfection with crisp pastry and apples. It will be seen from the prices I have quoted and from the fact that the portions are enormous that a princely meal costs only about 2/6. There is a fine selection of Hocks and Moselles.

Schmidt's is simply furnished in the modern style with a white colour scheme. It is open every day, including Sundays, until midnight.

AMERICAN

MRS. COOK'S, 12 Denham Street, is London's

American restaurant. The decoration consists of basket-work chairs and hurdles and the floor is sanded. Corn-on-the-Cob, Maryland Chicken and Waffles are the specialities, and omelettes are available in twenty-four different varieties. There is a special Kentucky dinner at 5/6, which includes such delicacies as Corn Soup, chicken with fried bananas and Strawberry Shortcake. Otherwise, everything is *à la carte*. There is no licence, but wine and beer may be sent out for. Needless to say, the coffee is excellent. It is worth remembering that Mrs. Cook's is open until 12.30 a.m. on week-days. On Sundays it is closed for lunch.

JEWISH

DOVEED, 29 Glasshouse Street, Piccadilly Circus, is a pleasantly furnished new Kosher restaurant. There are pink and ivory walls and the green floor is on two levels divided by shallow steps. Specialities are *Borsht*, a variant on the Russian soup, Stuffed Carp, Chopped Calf's Liver, Paprika Chicken and Hungarian Goulasch. The meat, of course, is all killed in the prescribed manner, and there are various restrictions designed to discourage the visiting Gentile. For instance, butter is not allowed in the same meal as meat, coffee must be drunk black after meat and, hardest of all to bear, the after-dinner cigarette is forbidden on Friday and Saturday evenings. However, these are after all small matters, and the service and cooking at the Restaurant Doveed are above reproach. It is open on Sundays.

RUSSIAN

I am not particularly fond of Russian food, which errs on the side of indigestibility. However, the friendly atmosphere of Russian restaurants does much to atone for this. TROIKA, 3 Denman Street, Piccadilly Circus, is gaily decorated with paintings of typical national scenes on the walls. On the menu there is, of course, *Borshtch*, a soup which varies in constituents as much as the chameleon in colours, but which is usually made from beetroot, leeks, celery, onions, cabbage and carrots. It should be served with a sauce-boat of sour cream. There is also a Red Caviar Omelette and, to follow, *Bœuf Sauté Stroganoff* or *Shashlyk*, which consists of pieces of lamb and bacon on a skewer. There is a table d'hôte lunch at 2/- and a four-course dinner at 3/6, and the restaurant is closed for lunch on Sundays.

CHATA, at the corner of Baker Street and George Street, has a certain charm of its own. The proprietor, M. Szladkowski, is a musician himself, and his customers include such well-known figures as Piatigorsky, Flesch and Schnabel. The food has lately improved under the direction of M. Topolskoff, a distinguished Russian chef, but the service remains casual. Nevertheless, I find myself going there often. Chata is furnished in Russian peasant style, and there are attractive paintings of scenery behind the windows. Nearly all the customers are known to each other and the proprietor, and one has the feeling of dining in a private house.

Borshtch is prepared in no less than three different ways at Chata. Other specialities are *Bœuf Stroganoff*, *Bitki po Kieffski*, which are Russian mince cutlets, and pancakes with cheese and sultanas called *Nalesniki*. Vodka is the appropriate drink. There is a lunch at 1/9 or 2/- and a four-course dinner with coffee at 3/6. Chata is open on Sundays.

SWISS

Like Quo Vadis, ROMANO SANTI, 50 Greek Street, is a picture gallery as well as a restaurant, and it exhibits works by such well-known artists as Eric Gill, Clare Leighton, William Rothenstein and R. M. Y. Gleadwe. It is situated on two floors of a delightful eighteenth century house and there is an old oak staircase of great antiquarian merit. In summer tables are laid in a garden at the back. The lower room is furnished in eau-de-Nil and buff, and the upper in Queen Mary rose and Princess Marina blue. Another interesting feature is that the chef, M. Rinaldi, late of the Pall Mall Restaurant, is the father 'n-law of the proprietor. Flowers are distributed to all ladies visiting the restaurant.

The cooking, as one would expect, combines the best features of French and Italian. Specialities are *Mинestrone*, *Ravioli*, *Fritto Misto* and *Zabaglione*. I can recommend also the *Filet de Sole Maison*, the Lobster Mornay and the roast bird, whichever is in season. There is a fine selection of sweets. Dinner costs about 5/- *à la carte*.

Entertainment is provided on gala nights and at other times of festivity by Italian accordion players. The restaurant is open on Sundays.

HUNGARIAN

JOSEF, 2 Greek Street, is a Hungarian and Serbian restaurant frequented by many connoisseurs of good food. This restaurant, decorated in green and silver, is tiny and very comfortable. The service, which is personally controlled by M. Josef himself, is quite flawless.

As for the food, two excellent soups are *Gomba Leves*, a delicate concoction of mushrooms, and Hungarian Bean Soup, which is very satisfying and quite excellent. Serbian Mixed Grill is a meal in itself at 3/-, and I can recommend Lobster with Mushroom Cream or Chicken Paprika. An heroic dish which does not appear on the menu but which M. Josef will always prepare for you if you give him sufficient notice is *Fotoneros*, a collection of every meat and vegetable under the sun, accompanied by a fresh peach, served on a wooden platter with a knife stuck through it. You need to be very hungry to eat this. More delicate eaters will appreciate the hot roasted goose liver called *Li'umay*, which cannot be obtained elsewhere in London.

There is sweet and dry wine from Tokay and a delicious Vin Rosé called Kadarka. Josef opens on Sundays at 6.30 p.m.

DANISH

The VIKING Bar, Berkeley Square, is a remote department of the May Fair Hotel. It is fortunate in being licensed and the hors-d'œuvre (*Smørrebrød* in Danish) can therefore be eaten with their time-

honoured accompaniment of *aqua vitae*. Some typical dishes are Smoked Eel with Scrambled Eggs, Fried Force-Meat Cakes with Cucumber Salad, Bacon and Egg Cake and *Pyt i Panna* with Fried Egg. There is a three-course lunch at 4/6 and a four-course dinner at 5/-.

Vintage Champagne is served at 3/- a glass and Hock, Graves and Vin Rosé at 1/-. Vodka is also obtainable. The Viking is open until after midnight every day and late suppers are served.

SWEDISH

Swedish cooking is noted for its freshness and purity. Only the best butter is used, that commodity being very cheap once you have crossed the North Sea. Americans, when they are choosing a chef, prefer Swedes, and with good reason. It is therefore unfortunate that there is, to the best of my knowledge, only one Swedish restaurant in London. This is ELLIKAN, 7 Crawford Street, off Baker Street, which is owned by and named after Mrs. Ellen (Ellikan is the diminutive) Kreuger, a first cousin of the late lamented Match King.

You must begin your meal with *Smörgasbord*, or Swedish hors-d'œuvre, among which you will find some quite original delicacies. *Smörgasbord* should really be washed down with a glass or two of schnapps, but as the restaurant is unlicensed you will have to bring your own with you. Next, you will do well to eat braised steak (*Slottstek* is how it appears on the menu) or Veal à la Suèdoise or Meat Balls with Brown Beans. Lemon Cream can be recommended as a sweet, and the coffee is as

good as you will find within the confines of this tea-drinking metropolis. Lunches are from 1/6 and dinner at 2/6 and 3/6. Ellikan is closed on Sundays.

INDIAN

VEERASWAMY'S India Restaurant, 99 Regent Street (the entrance is in Swallow Street), gives the lie to those who fondly imagine that curry is the only Indian dish. There is curry, of course, and curry powder plays no part in its composition : it is made entirely with spices. Madras Chicken Curry is the speciality, and it consists of the whole wing of a chicken appropriately treated. Also there are vegetable curries. But this is by no means all. There is Indian Omelette, which is delicately flavoured with spices ; Chicken Biriani, steamed in butter with a special rice ; Grilled Kabab ; and some succulent fruit sweets, Mangusteeni, Lichi and Mangoes. There are no less than six different kinds of Indian bread.

Veeraswamy's has coloured panels of Indian scenes on its walls, and there are real Indian punkahs, fans which are worked by the wallahs in hot weather. The waiters, who are all Indians, are attractively got up in white clothes and turbans and red sashes, and the service is an Oriental dream.

The restaurant is fully licensed, and it is open all Sunday.

DELHI, 117 Tottenham Court Road, is a restaurant where genuine Indian curry is served at a reasonable price. Good curry, unfortunately, is the exception rather than the rule in London, and

travesties of this noble dish are all too often met with on the menus of inferior restaurants. It is not sufficient to do up a little mutton and rice with curry powder. The real thing is a much more elaborate affair, and it is essential that it should be served with Bombay Duck, Poppadums, fresh chutneys and Lime or Brinjal Pickle. The curry at Delhi is vouched for by no less a person than the Rajah of Sarawak, who is an enthusiastic customer. The coffee is also excellent. There is a lunch at 1/6 and dinner at 2/6.

Delhi is open all Sunday.

MYSORE, 6 Glendower Place, South Kensington, is frequented both by distinguished Indians and by Englishmen who have spent their lives in the East and know a good curry when they taste one. There is a quiet, Oriental atmosphere, and the restaurant holds only twenty-four people. Meals are at 1/8 and 1/9 and nothing is served *à la carte*. Mysore is unlicensed, but wines, spirits and beers are sent out for. It opens on Sunday evenings.

CHINESE

Chinese restaurants are more popular in New York than in London, but there is an excellent one hard by Piccadilly Circus called simply the CHINESE RESTAURANT, 4 Glasshouse Street. It must be explained that the Chinese cuisine is comparable in its infinite variety only to the French. As an Englishman who has never visited China, I can only give a brief impression.

At the Chinese Restaurant the menu consists of

no less than two hundred and eleven dishes. Many of these are founded on lobster, crab, chicken or pork, and are served with plain boiled rice. Subtle flavouring is supplied by white and black mushrooms, tomato, bamboo and bean shoots. These last have a quite exquisite taste, since they contain in a very small compass all the essential salts and minerals of vegetable growth. With the food unsweetened China tea is drunk from little porcelain bowls. The soups, whether noodle, oyster, bamboo, mushroom or chicken liver, are as good as anything European.

The classic Chinese dishes may be obtained at half a day's notice, and a deposit must accompany the order. These include Houng Shiu Yu Chee (stewed shark's fin, Mandarin style), Sai Foo Yin Wo (stewed bird's nest with minced chicken and water-lily nut) and Pee Dan (preserved eggs). As for sweets, ly-chee or preserved ginger in syrup is a delight to the palate.

The clientele of the Chinese Restaurant is divided between seasoned Oriental gourmets and young office girls in search of a cheap and satisfying meal. There is a table d'hôte lunch at 2/9 or 3/- and a dinner at 4/- or 4/6. The manager keeps the house open on Sundays and Bank Holidays, and I feel that he would be equally unperturbed by the Judgment Day.

JAPANESE

The menu at TOKIWA, 8 Denmark Street, Charing Cross Road, is far from helpful. For instance a dish called *Mushi-Zushi* is described for the benefit of English visitors as " Hot Gomoku-Zuchi." The

dish to order is the famous *Sukiyaki*. This is beef, chicken or duck cut in thin slices and served raw with vegetables and rice. The diner cooks it to his own satisfaction on a spirit lamp—a local substitute for the traditional charcoal brazier—which the waiter places on his table. Green tea is included in the price, 3/6 or 4/-. There is also a lunch of three courses at 2/6 and a dinner of four courses at 3/-.

Upstairs there is a Japanese tea-room or *Chanoma* where the visitor squats on a mat on the floor before a low table. The window here is of paper and the decoration such that it is hard to believe that Charing Cross Road is only fifty yards away.

To the casual student Japanese cooking seems almost identical with Chinese, but in point of fact they are as different as French and English. Curiously enough macaroni, known as *Udon*, figures to a great extent in the national cuisine. Oysters, eels and lobsters are other popular dishes, and the soups are excellent. *Saké*, or rice wine, is the right thing to drink.

Tokiwa is open all day on Sundays.

COSMOPOLITAN

Should you wish to sample all the great cuisines of Europe under one roof you may do so at the Restaurant D'ALBERT, 53–55 Beak Street. Every day there is a *plat du jour* of a different nationality : English, Hungarian, French, Russian, Greek and Italian. The prices are very low—a four-course lunch costs 2/- and a five-course dinner 2/9—and the cooking is excellent, since both the proprietor

and the chef grew up under the ægis of Luigi at the Embassy Club. As is the case with so many small restaurants in London, there is no licence, but any wine within reason can be sent out for.

The proprietor, M. Pessione, will tell you that the Venetian painter Canaletto once lodged twenty yards from where the restaurant stands and that Dickens lived opposite in Golden Square, but these are, after all, minor considerations when a delicious *Pilaff de Foie de Volaille* is languishing on your plate. Restaurant d'Albert opens for dinner on Sundays.

VI

TAVERNS, CHOP-HOUSES AND ENGLISH RESTAURANTS

I AM tormented by the pangs of conscience. Once more, in my thoughts, I sniff the savoury incense of Thick Turtle. Once more, judiciously, I select a juicy steak for the grill. Seated in a little cubicle, a beam blackened by the Great Fire of London above my head, I surrender my heart once more to a glass of Vintage Port.

Have I given too much space to foreign cooking ? Have I been unfair to our native brand ? Am I not, after all, an Englishman, with a fundamental distrust of " mucked-up Frenchy stuff " ?

I will take you to one or two restaurants where Time stands still and which, at the first hint of re-decoration, modernisation or Continentalisation, nearly all their customers would abandon.

Probably the oldest tavern in the world is the **GEORGE AND VULTURE**, 3 Castle Court, Lombard Street. Historical evidence shows that it existed in the year 1175 under the name of " The George." A good many years later, it achieved fame as the eating-house at which Mr. Pickwick " severally and confidentially " invited forty-five people to dine with him.

In the old panelled room downstairs, where Mr.

Terry has tended the grill for forty-three years, I have enjoyed some of the finest English cooking in my experience. I recommend, besides the chops and steaks, Lancashire Hot Pot, Jugged Hare and Red Currant Jelly or Braised Lamb's Tongues and Spinach. The service is exceptionally quick and courteous, and there is a very good wine cellar. The cost of a lunch or dinner is about 4/-.

The George and Vulture is closed on Sundays.

YE OLDE CHESHIRE CHEESE, 145 Fleet Street, runs a dead heat with Stratford-on-Avon as the Mecca of the transatlantic pilgrim. If, while you are drinking your coffee there, you look on the back of your spoon, you will read the words: "Rebuilt in 1667." A subtle piece of advertising, that, and the Cheshire Cheese is not ashamed to advertise its antiquity. When Mr. H. J. Worthiam, the present manager, took it over it was in a bad way, and it has been his deliberate policy to make it known that this was Dr. Johnson's and Oliver Goldsmith's favourite haunt, that here are wooden beams three centuries old, and that "Ye Steppe" has been worn almost to the ground by generation after generation of customers. As a result, the "Cheese" has prospered, so that Mr. Worthiam is now in a position to reel off a short list of the celebrities who have *not* visited it.

"Many days," so runs the proclamation, "hath ye hirelings scoured ye countryside for ye Plover Bird and tasty mushrooms to mix with Ye Steak, Kidney and Succulent Oyster."

For those who have a taste for rich fare, Ye Famous Pudding, boiled for fourteen hours before serving, could hardly be bettered; the price of a

helping is 2/6. Besides this, you may eat Turtle Soup, grills of all kinds, Ye Pancake and, best of all, Ye Toasted Cheese. A unique dish this, and I have discovered its secret. The cheese is moistened with beer instead of the more usual milk. Could anything be more English?

You may drink strong ale, beer, stout or cyder, and there are some noted Ports. The "Cheese" is open on Sundays.

SIMPSON'S-IN-THE-STRAND is an English eating-house de luxe: in point of fact it is owned by the Savoy Hotel Company. Past you, as you sit in your cubicle in a high panelled room, canter the carvers pushing before them gigantic joints on trolleys. The air resounds with shouts such as: "Roast beef No. 9!" It is an absorbing pastime to watch the carvers. Years of training are necessary for this very specialised profession. Unfortunately, Charlie Brown, master-carver at Simpson's for many a long year, now wields the knife no more, but he has a worthy successor in Arthur Carter.

The joints, such as Saddle of Mutton or Scotch Sirloin, are supplied with vegetables and Cheshire or Cheddar cheese to follow at an inclusive cost of 3/6 or 4/-. A high price, but the meat is perfectly roasted on open fires and you will not find a better cut within a hundred miles of Piccadilly Circus.

Ladies may not enter the downstairs room, but there is accommodation for them on the first floor. The restaurant has lately been opened for dinner as well as lunch on Sundays.

Across the Strand is RULES, 35 Maiden Lane, famous since the last century as a resort of sportsmen.

On the ground floor there is a well-appointed Bar, which deals handsomely with you before passing you on to the dining department. This is decorated with interesting sporting prints and cartoons, and there are red plush settees. Oysters and lobsters are a speciality here, and the grills are exquisite : chump chops and steaks are at their juiciest and best. Personally, however, I prefer to go to Rules in the middle of August. I know of no place in London where a plump young grouse comes more seductively to table. With it, I like to drink a glass of Tucher Lager.

Upstairs at Rules there is a more secluded atmosphere, and ladies should be taken here, away from the ribald and manly laughter at the Bar. My favourite table is in the corner round to the left, where I am able to dine shielded by a partition from the sight of other people eating sweets before I have finished my soup.

As for prices, they are by no means cheap, but a goodish dinner is to be had for somewhere in the neighbourhood of 6/-. If you order grouse, of course, it is apt to cost you rather more. My only grievance against Rules is that it is closed on Sundays.

Should you wish to dine with a ghost, you have only to wend your way to the RED LION RESTAURANT, 1 Red Lion Square. In a charming seventeenth century house, you may enjoy English regional cooking by the subdued glow of candlelight. The ghost is that of a miser who was murdered for his gold two centuries ago, and it still puts in an appearance from time to time. Some of the best dishes on the menu are Surrey Liver and Bacon Hot Pot,

Royal Pigeon Pie, and Norfolk Jugged Hare. The Cheddar cheese is admirable, and it is certainly startling to find such good coffee in an English restaurant. Lunch costs you 2/- and dinner 2/6. The restaurant is closed on Sundays.

SCOTT'S, Piccadilly Circus, is one of London's leading fish restaurants. Among the soups, Clear Turtle, *Bisque de Homard* and Oyster Soup are specialities. To follow, there is an excellent *Filet de Sole à la Scotts*, or you may eat Curried Shrimps à l'Indienne, Lobster Newburg, *Turbot Braisé Polignac*, crab, salmon, trout, haddock, mackerel, cod or plaice. Entrées and roasts are also served. There is an excellent wine list, and Chablis is a speciality of the house.

The surroundings have been unaltered since 1851, and the old traditions go back to 1650. The average cost of a meal is 10/6. Scott's is open on Sundays.

A typically English restaurant, in spite of the foreign-sounding name, is MALZY'S, 1 Tottenham Court Road. With unexpected candour, the management informs me that all the principals in the most notorious murder cases in the past thirty years appear to have been customers at some time or another. Be that as it may, Malzy's has for sixty years attracted diners in search of a fish dinner. Oysters, for instance, are served here in six different ways: plain, stewed, in soup, fried, scalloped and devilled. I can recommend also baked crab, stewed eels, Lobster Newburg, and fried smelts. Other notable dishes of the house, for its menu is by no means confined to fish, are Roast Duckling and

Apple Sauce, Roast Pheasant and Game Chips, Jugged Hare and Red Currant Jelly, and Silverside and Carrots. The wine list is more spectacular than sound, but Meux's Ales and Stout are on draught.

The atmosphere is particularly gay. There is a profusion of flowers and the glass lamp-shades are certainly unique. There is a table d'hôte luncheon of three courses for 2/-, and the price of a dinner à la carte is about 3/6. The restaurant is open on Sundays.

STONE'S CHOP HOUSE, 32 Panton Street, is chiefly notable for the Olde Worlde costumes of the waiters. Since it was founded in 1770 the personnel is, of course, fitted out in Tudor costumes. It is difficult to restrain oneself from addressing it, or them, as : " Ho, varlet ! " and letting off a variety of antique oaths. Not that there is any occasion for oaths, for the Dover Sole here brings tears to the eyes for grief that anything so innocent and tender should have to yield up its life. The steaks and chops, likewise, are excellent and the Steak and Kidney Pudding is a big " draw."

French is taboo at Stone's : the menu is called the Bill of Fare, and the entrées figure under the unusual name of " removes." Stone's has an exceptionally masculine atmosphere. There is none of that nonsense about painted mirrors, concealed lighting, *Toile du Jouy* and such-like. The prices are reasonable to a degree. Stone's is closed on Sundays.

The LORD BELGRAVE, 60 Whitcomb Street, grills what is undoubtedly the best steak in town.

There is no fuss or pretension about it. The diner is invited to prod his meat with an expert finger before it is cooked, and it is served by homely waitresses in homely surroundings. But what a steak! It is tender and juicy and agreeably "flared." It is a meal in itself, needing nothing to introduce or follow it, and it is washed down by a homely glass of ale. Other specialities are the Turtle Soup, the chops, the Lancashire Hot Pot and such-like old English fare.

There is no eating at the Lord Belgrave on Sundays.

HATCHETT's White Horse Cellar, 1 Dover Street, at the corner of that street and Piccadilly, dates from 1720, the year of the South Sea Bubble. In spite of the fact that it is well below ground level, the air is always kept fresh. There is a lunch at 4/- and a full dinner at 7/6, and shorter meals are arranged for those in a hurry.

Hatchett's is traditionally the resort of seasoned Colonials and returned adventurers. It is open on Sundays.

There is no more thoroughly British eating-house in the West End than ARTHUR's, 11 Swallow Street. The decorations consist largely of enormous and succulent hams hanging from the ceiling; there are no soft lights or imitation pillars; the presiding genii are called simply Arthur and Bert; the menu is written in English; and the food is excellent. There is a four-course lunch at 2/- and a four- or five-course dinner, with coffee, at 3/6. Apart from this you may eat chops, steaks, lamb cutlets, mixed grills, oysters, lobsters, prawns and some first-rate cheese.

All the meat is English or Scottish. Bitter beer, stout and XXXX strong ale may be had on draught, and there is a business-like selection of wines. The restaurant is closed on Sundays.

I mention the QUEEN'S HEAD, 60 Oxford Street, because as far as I know it is the smallest restaurant in London. Indeed, there could hardly be a smaller one. The Savoy Restaurant, so I am told by the management, has seated as many as 1,400 people at a time. The Queen's Head seats only two, so it is advisable to book the table in advance. The speciality is sausage and mash with fried onions.

VII

WHERE TO DINE NEAR HOME

THERE are some admirable restaurants outside "Restaurant Land." In Kensington, in Chelsea, at Notting Hill, Paddington or Maida Vale, wherever there is a better-class residential district, there the local gastronomes, when they are too weary to board a bus or a taxi for Soho, forgather at some chosen spot for a quiet lunch or dinner.

Here are some which I can recommend :

On the Embankment, at 35 Cheyne Walk, S.W.3, is the famous BLUE COCKATOO, which almost every celebrity has visited at one time or another. It specialises in breakfasts, luncheons, which are from 1/8, teas, dinners at 2/3 and suppers. Noted dishes of the house are Mixed Grill, Eggs and Bacon and Kippers. Wines and spirits can be sent out for.

The Blue Cockatoo is tiny and sombrely panelled in black. It has a ghost in the form of a little lady dressed in green who appears from time to time. Dining is by candlelight.

The real reason why Chelsea people go to the Blue Cockatoo is the presence of Hetty, who is undoubtedly the world's most celebrated waitress. Hetty is a character. She tells her customers just where they get off, and they love it. Rumour has it that

at one time she was dismissed, but brought back soon enough when all the old customers went on strike on her behalf. The favourite subject of conversation of this bespectacled, combative lady is her unique collection of autograph books, on which she is only too glad to give information rather on these lines: "They're all in my books. I've got them all there. Sir William Orpen, the famous author, is there. Then there's Mark Hambourg, the violinist. Oh yes, they've all been here. Oliver Lodge, the Member of Parliament, and Douglas Byng, the scientist, have been here. I've got their names. And then there's Ellen Wilkinson and the Houston Sisters and all that lot."

Oh, yes. Hetty is a character. She is still hoping that Paderewski will come in one day between "chukkers." She has been with the restaurant since shortly after it started in 1914, and she shows no signs as yet of relaxing her bulldog grip.

The Blue Cockatoo is open on Sundays. In fact, it is its busiest day.

The QUEEN'S Restaurant, 4 Sloane Square, is quiet, sumptuous, and expensive for those who like to eat *à la carte*. The food is of a quality which is seldom found at such a distance from the more usual haunts of the London gourmet. There is a four-course lunch at 3/6 and a large dinner at 5/6. Each day there are three or four *plats du jour*. *Fritto Misto* is a speciality, and there is Italian as well as French cooking. Hors-d'œuvre have been the foundation of the restaurant's good name, and they should not be missed on any account.

The Queen's is not one of the liveliest restaurants in London, but it is dependable and the service is excellent. It is open all Sunday.

The GOOD INTENT, 318 King's Road, S.W.3, is easily recognised by the carvings outside, which were taken from the battleship *Defiance* when it was broken up at Plymouth. Inside, there are mural paintings by Edward Halliday, representing the history of Chelsea through the ages. The furniture is modernistic, and accords well with the pale green carpet.

There is a four-course lunch at 3/- and a five-course dinner at 4/6. Specialities are *Omelette des Artistes*, which is soufflé with cheese sauce and mushrooms, *Suprême de Volaille Marin*, and *Oeufs Brouillés à la Crème aux Crevettes Roses* (buttered egg with minced shrimps). On the wine list I recommend San-Dam, which is a Milanese product, unique to this restaurant, and resembles a red Burgundy. There is also a Niersteiner Domthal 1921 and a red Château Carbonnieux 1928 besides many other excellent French and German wines. A speciality is the Vieille Fine Champagne Maison, a wonderfully smooth brandy of the year 1865.

The restaurant is now open on Sundays.

The RENDEZ-VOUS Restaurant, 50 Gloucester Road, S.W.7, provides French and Italian cooking at very moderate prices. There is a four-course lunch at 2/- and a dinner at 2/6 or 3/6. The clientele is mainly residential, and consists of people who appreciate good cooking at very cheap prices.

There is no licence, but French, German and Italian wines are sent out for on request. The

decoration is simple, but there is an attractive and unusual flower design on the walls.

The Rendez-Vous is open all Sunday.

The KENSINGTON Restaurant, 20, Church Street, W.8, was founded thirty years ago by M. Demaria, who still presides over his guests. It was re-decorated some five years back in the style of a luxury cinema. There are French and Italian specialities, and only Scottish meat is served. There is a three-course lunch at 3/- and a five-course dinner at 5/6 or *à la carte*. I recommend the *Délice de Sole Caprice*, *Homard à la Mornay*, Veal Cutlet *Napolitaine* and *Fritto Misto*.

There is a good wine list, on which I will mention only a Clos du Presbytère 1928. M. Demaria specialises in brandy. He has Cave d'Empereur 1811, Louis Philippe and many another precious bottle. The restaurant is open until 11 p.m. on week-days and 10 p.m. on Sundays. The clientele is mainly residential.

LE RESTAURANT MINO REVEL, otherwise the Coronet Restaurant, 113 Notting Hill Gate, W.11, is charmingly decorated in three shades of blue. It specialises in grills and in French and Italian cookery. The dish to order is *Scaloppine al Marsala*. There is a lunch at 1/6 and a dinner at 2/6 or *à la carte*. The wine list is fairly comprehensive.

Mino Revel is open all Sunday. It does a good trade both for lunch and dinner among residents in the neighbourhood.

The WESTBOURNE Restaurant, at the corner of Spring Street and Praed Street, W.2, is no restaurant

de luxe. The decorations consist to a great extent of the hats and overcoats of its many enthusiastic customers. The restaurant, which is approached through the bar, is floored with tattered linoleum, and much of the wall space is taken up with a record of the doings of the Licensed Victuallers' Golfing Society. The three-course lunch at 1/6 is also served in the evenings at 2/-.

Specialities are Rump Steak and Kidney Pudding, Caviare and Shepherd's Pie with tomato sauce. I can recommend the Malescot St. Exupéry 1921 as an excellent Claret, and there is also an exhausting selection of Champagnes. The popular Percy is the *maitre d'hôtel*.

Alas ! the Westbourne Restaurant closes on Sundays.

The CASA PRADA EMPIRE RESTAURANT, 292 Euston Road, opposite Warren Street Tube Station, is decorated by framed autographed panels containing the signatures of Grand Opera singers, musicians, radio entertainers and others, and it is frequented to a great extent by musical and artistic people.

There is a lunch at 2/- and a dinner at 3/-, or a good meal *à la carte* costs about 5/-. Specialities of the house are Dover Sole *Maison*, *Escalope de Veau Casa Prada*, *Crêpe à la Flamme d'Amour* and *Zabaglione Pick-me-up*. On the wine list I notice Soave Casa Prada, Châteauneuf du Pape, Moulin à Vent, Clos de Vougeot and many other well-known wines from France, Italy and Germany.

The Empire Restaurant is open from noon on Sundays.

The WELLESLEY Restaurant, 4 Wellesley Court, Maida Vale, W.9, is got up in an attractive modern style. There is an American Bar which is unrivalled in London for comfort and service. Lunches are served at 2/- and dinners at 3/-. There is also supper *à la carte*. A speciality is Vitamin Salad at 9d. and 1/-. There's no accounting for tastes!

The Wellesley opens at noon on Sundays.

VIII

ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT

THIS is a book on "Where to Dine in London." It is therefore straining a point to include even those night haunts which offer their clients good restaurant cooking. The others, whose culinary efforts do not rise above kippers or scrambled eggs, do not come within the scope of this work. Without prejudice, I have made a selection from those places which are smart, more or less legally conducted and gastronomically sound.

Night Clubs have gone. To the Private Parties which have succeeded them the public is not admitted, nor are wines and spirits sold on their premises. Should such refreshment be required by an invited guest, however, it may be ordered in advance from a wine merchant. A waiter or steward will accept any order for delivery given to such a wine merchant.

It comes to this. To the Old Florida invitation is by private introduction only. Most of the other fashionable Private Parties use their discretion in answering requests for invitations sent through the post.

There is yet another formality. A wine order (customarily for six Whisky, six Gin, six Rum, six Brandy, six Champagne, six Vermouth) has to be filled in at least twelve hours before delivery. It is

often possible for a guest to have an unfinished bottle labelled in his name and kept for him free of charge in the cellar.

It is usual for guests to make a contribution of 7/6 or less towards the expenses of the party on entering the premises. But for this, night life would be within the means of a vastly larger public. As it is, it remains a luxury, and its devotees are so few as to be personally known to nearly everyone in the business. It could not exist for long without its support from the Army and the Police, the former inside and the latter outside its doors. Many of the parties are run by retired military men, and military men make up a large proportion of the invited guests, while the commissionaires on the pavement are as often as not pensioners from Scotland Yard. When any party is raided by the police, the proceedings are sometimes held up by good-humoured badinage among old pals at the door.

Some of London's night haunts faithfully reproduce the atmosphere of Harlem ; some exist merely to introduce solitary guests to the dancing partners ; there are some which pander to every conceivable form of vice ; many have been closed down again and again, yet still struggle on. The reader must find these for himself. I am concerned only with some of the places to which a man may be taken by his sister without embarrassment.

The OLD FLORIDA, South Bruton Mews, is the resort of the gilded youth of Mayfair. There is no place quite like it. It is neither furtive nor depraved, yet there is an air of gaiety and abandonment. It is on the ground floor, so that there are no tortuous stairs to climb in the weary hours of

the early morning. It is discreetly lit from the ceiling, and a star-shaped mirror of black glass reflects the inverted images of the dancers.

The cuisine is really first-class, and the prices are those of any luxury restaurant. Especially to be recommended are the *Suprême de Volaille sous Cloche* and the *Brochette à la Florida*, which is chicken liver, bacon, mushroom and chipolata served with a hot sherry and *foie gras* sauce.

Only guests in evening dress are admitted, and the contribution is 7/6. The hours are 11 p.m. to 5 a.m., excluding Sundays. There is sometimes a cabaret at 2 a.m.

The Florida is run under the same management as the San Marco. It has been open for five years. Long may it so continue !

The FOUR HUNDRED, 28 Leicester Square, is completely swathed in red and beige silk which deadens all echoes from walls and ceiling. Dancing is to a dim, religious light in a large room intersected by vaulted pillars. Apart from the regulars of fashionable night life there are many foreigners among the guests. Mr. Hector, late of the Savoy Hotel, is the manager.

The supper menu is something quite out of the ordinary, as there is a French, an Italian and a Chinese chef. Specialities are Egg Foo Yung, an omelette with chicken, ham and mushrooms, and Lobster Sub Gum, which is stewed with vegetables. The Ly-chees in Syrup are excellent.

Evening dress is essential, and the contribution is 7/6. The hours are 11 p.m. to 6 a.m., excluding Sundays. At the time of writing there is no cabaret.

BRUMMELL's, 13 Albemarle Street, has perhaps the most charming atmosphere of any Private Party in Town. It is below the street level, but air conditioning and a false ceiling amply compensate for this. The period *décor* has been carried out in an elegant style worthy of the long departed "Beau."

To be recommended for supper are *Sole Grillé Brummell's*, done with mushrooms and tomatoes, and *Suprême de Poulet* with asparagus tips and *pommes Parisiennes*. Any reasonable orders can be executed by the kitchen staff.

The band is at present under the direction of Louis Simmonds, late of the Embassy Club, who was an orchestra leader at the age of thirteen and a great favourite, in the old days, of the Duke of Windsor. There is sometimes a cabaret at 2 a.m.

Brummell's is a new Private Party and one that deserves to be popular. Evening dress is essential and the contribution is 7/6. The hours are 11 p.m. to 5 a.m., excluding Sundays. Mr. Guy Barker is the host.

The PARADISE, 189 Regent Street, is tastefully decorated in pastel blue with beige curtains. It was only recently started, but already has a distinguished Mayfair clientele. Mr. Henry de Bray, the musical comedy star, is the host. There is a supper menu at ordinary restaurant prices and breakfast dishes are a speciality.

Evening dress is optional and the contribution is 7/6. The hours are 11 p.m. to 5 a.m., excluding Sundays. There is a cabaret at half-past one.

The COCONUT GROVE, 177 Regent Street, is a cocoanut grove with a vengeance. The gigantic

dance-room downstairs has a kind of barbaric splendour. Southern landscapes, lit from below, adorn the walls, the pillars sprout green fronds and the band plays in a log cabin. There is an amusing aquarium in one corner.

For supper there is *Filet de Sole Cocoanut Grove* grilled with tomatoes and mushrooms and *Suprême de Volaille Maryland*, with fried bananas, asparagus tips and *pommes rissolées*. The Chinese chef has a variety of Oriental specialities. The kippers are also very good.

The Cocoanut Grove has been open for more than two years and it is very popular. Evening dress is optional and the contribution is 7/6. The hours are 11 p.m. to 5 a.m., excluding Sundays, and there is an excellent band and cabaret. The clientele is an interesting one and the chucker-out is certainly the toughest in London. Anyone creating a riot is liable to find himself precipitated through the shop windows on the far side of Regent Street. Captain Gordon is the host.

A LONDON RESTAURANT GUIDE

(The restaurants are arranged, for the convenience of the reader, in groups according to their geographical situation. In each section they are placed roughly in order of importance and/or expensiveness.)

Piccadilly Circus and Leicester Square

- THE CARLTON, Pall Mall.
- THE PICCADILLY, Piccadilly.
- THE TROCADERO, Piccadilly Circus.
- THE CAFÉ DE PARIS, 3, Coventry Street.
- THE CAFÉ ANGLAIS, 20, Leicester Square.
- THE CAFÉ ROYAL, 68, Regent Street.
- THE HUNGARIA, 14, Regent Street.
- LE PERROQUET, 43, Leicester Square.
- THE REGENT PALACE, Glasshouse Street.
- ODDENINO'S, 58, Regent Street.
- THE CAFÉ MONICO, 19, Shaftesbury Avenue.
- THE CRITERION, 222, Piccadilly.
- SCOTT's, Coventry Street.

THE COMEDY, 38, Panton Street.
THE FLORENCE, 53, Rupert Street.
PINOLI'S, 17, Wardour Street.
MARTINEZ' SPANISH RESTAURANT, 25, Swallow St.
MAJORCA, 15, Brewer Street.
KEMPINSKI, Swallow Street.
CHEZ VICTOR, 45, Wardour Street.
MRS. COOK'S, 12, Denman Street.
TROIKA, 3, Denman Street.
THE CHINESE RESTAURANT, 4, Glasshouse Street.
VEERASWAMY'S INDIA RESTAURANT, 99, Regent St.
DOVEED, 29, Glasshouse Street.
STONE'S CHOP HOUSE, 32, Panton Street.
ARTHUR'S, 11, Swallow Street.
PRINCE'S GOLDEN BRASSERIE 196, Piccadilly.
BRASSERIE UNIVERSELLE, Piccadilly Circus.
CAFÉ COLETTE, 4, Swallow Street.
THE LORD BELGRAVE, 60, Whitcomb Street.
SANDY'S SNACK BAR, 25, Oxendon Street.
THE S.F. SNACK CAFÉ, 6, Denman Street.

Park Lane and Mayfair

CLARIDGE'S, Brook Street.
THE BERKELEY, 77, Piccadilly.
THE DORCHESTER, Park Lane.
GROSVENOR HOUSE, Park Lane.
THE MAY FAIR, Berkeley Street.
THE SPLENDIDE AND GREEN PARK, 105, Piccadilly.

THE PARK LANE, Piccadilly.
THE SAN MARCO, Devonshire House, Piccadilly.
THE LANSDOWNE RESTAURANT, Berkeley Square.
LA MAISON BASQUE 11, Dover Street.
LE COQ D'OR, Stratton Street.
THE CAFÉ DIVAN NEW CLARGES, Clarges Street.
THE HANOVER, 6, Mill Street, Hanover Square.
HATCHETT'S WHITE HORSE CELLAR, 1, Dover St.
THE VIKING BAR, Berkeley Square.
MONA LISA, 16, Avery Row, Bond Street.

Soho

THE LONDON CASINO, 11, Old Compton Street.
AU JARDIN DES GOURMETS, 5, Greek Street.
L'ESCARGOT BIENVENU, 48, Greek Street.
ISOLA BELLA, 15, Frith Street.
QUO VADIS, 27, Dean Street.
KETTNER'S, 29, Church Street.
JOSEF, 2, Greek Street.
ROMANO SANTI, 50, Greek Street.
MARS, 19, Frith Street.
CHANTECLER, 56, Frith Street.
RENDEZVOUS, 45, Dean Street.
LE MOULIN D'OR, 27, Church Street.
FILLIEZ, Frith Street.
AU PETIT COIN DE FRANCE, 7, Carnaby Street.
RESTAURANT FRANÇAIS, 63, Dean Street.
RESTAURANT D'ITALIE, 36, Greek Street.

RISTORANTE DEL COMMERCIO, 63, Frith Street.
CHINESE MAXIM RESTAURANT, 30, Wardour Street.
D'ALBERT, 53, Frith Street.
BARCELONA, 17, Beak Street.
CERVANTES, 18, Old Compton Street.
ESPAÑA, 11, Wardour Street.
THE GREEK RESTAURANT, 166, Shaftesbury Avenue.

Oxford Street and Holborn

THE CUMBERLAND, Marble Arch.
THE MOUNT ROYAL, Marble Arch.
THE LANGHAM, Portland Place.
FRASCATI, 32, Oxford Street.
THE HOLBORN RESTAURANT, 218, High Holborn.
PAGANI'S, 42, Great Portland Street.
BOLIVAR, Chandos Place.
BUZZARD'S, 197, Oxford Street.
THE RED LION, 1, Red Lion Square.
CHATA, 15-17, Baker Street.
DOBRIN, 38, Baker Street.
THE QUEEN'S HEAD, 60, Oxford Street.

Tottenham Court Road and Charing Cross Road

THE EIFFEL TOWER, 1, Percy Street.
MALZY'S, 1A, Tottenham Court Road.
ANTOINE, 40, Charlotte Street.

ÉTOILE, 30, Charlotte Street.
 SCHMIDT'S, 41, Charlotte Street.
 GENNARO'S, 63, New Compton Street.
 BERTORELLI, 19, Charlotte Street.
 DELHI, 117, Tottenham Court Road.
 TOKIWA, 8, Denmark Street.
 ELIOT's (for hors d'oeuvre), 28, Charing Cross Road.

St. James's : South of Piccadilly

THE RITZ, Piccadilly.
 QUAGLINO'S, 16, Bury Street.
 L'APÉRITIF GRILL, 102, Jermyn Street.
 PRUNIER, 72, St. James's Street.
 LUIGI'S GRILL, 55, Jermyn Street.
 QUINTO'S, Arlington House, Arlington Street.
 JULES, 85, Jermyn Street.
 WILTON'S (for oysters), 34, King Street.

Trafalgar Square

THE VICTORIA, Northumberland Avenue.
 THE IVY, 1, West Street.
 GATTI'S, 7, Adelaide Street.
 THE DUNCANNON, 3, Duncannon Street.
 ST. GEORGE'S, 37, St. Martin's Lane.

Knightsbridge, Kensington and Chelsea

THE HYDE PARK, Knightsbridge.

THE ROYAL PALACE, High Street, Kensington.
SOVRANI'S, 163, Knightsbridge.
THE QUEEN'S, 4, Sloane Square.
THE ROYAL COURT, Sloane Square.
THE KNIGHTSBRIDGE GRILLE, 171, Knightsbridge.
THE GOOD INTENT, 318, King's Road.
THE KENSINGTON, 20, Church Street.
THE RENDEZ-VOUS, 50, Gloucester Road.
RESTAURANT PARISIEN, 3, Onslow Place, South Kensington.
THE BLUE COCKATOO, 35, Cheyne Walk (on the Embankment).
MYSORE, 6, Glendower Place, Kensington.

Strand and Fleet Street

THE SAVOY, Strand.
THE WALDORF, Aldwych.
ROMANO'S, 399, Strand.
BOULESTIN, 25, Southampton Street.
SIMPSON'S-IN-THE-STRAND, 100, Strand.
RULES, 35, Maiden Lane.
THE STRAND PALACE, Strand.
YE OLDE CHESHIRE CHEESE, 145, Fleet Street.
THE MITRE TAVERN, 125, Chancery Lane.
THE DEVEREUX, 20, Devereux Court (opp. Law Courts).
THE FALSTAFF, 70, Fleet Street.
SHIRREFF'S, Ludgate Hill (under the Arches).

City

GREAT EASTERN HOTEL, Liverpool Street Station.

PIMMS :—

RED HOUSE RESTAURANT, 94, Bishopsgate.

THE IMPERIAL, 1, Billiter Square.

YE OLDE DR. BUTLER'S HEAD, Masons Avenue.

57, Old Bailey.

3, Poultry.

42, Threadneedle Street.

BIRCH's, 39a, Old Broad Street.

SWEETINGS, 39, Queen Victoria Street.

THE GEORGE AND VULTURE, 3, Castle Court (off Lombard Street.)

SIMPSON'S, 75, Cheapside.

SIMPSON'S TAVERN, 38½, Cornhill.

THE LONDON TAVERN, 53, Fenchurch Street.

YE OLDE WATLING RESTAURANT, 29, Watling Street.

THE FALSTAFF, 12, Philpot Lane.

Here and There

THE GREAT CENTRAL, Marylebone Road.

THE GREAT WESTERN, Paddington Station.

THE EUSTON, Euston Station.

ST. ERMIN'S, Caxton Street, Westminster.

CHILTERN COURT, Baker Street.

ELLIKAN, 7, Crawford Street.

THE WELLESLEY, Wellesley Court, Maida Vale.

THE CASA PRADA, 292, Euston Road.

LE RESTAURANT MINO REVEL, 113, Notting Hill Gate.

THE WESTBOURNE, Spring Street, Paddington.

